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ONE PRIMEVAL LANGUAGE

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Ancient Inscriptions

IN

ALPHABETIC CHARACTERS OF LOST POWERS FROM
THE FOUR CONTINENTS:

12880

INCLUDING

THE VOICE OF ISRAEL FROM THE ROCKS OF SINAI:

AND THE VESTIGES OF PATRIARCHAL TRADITION FROM
THE MONUMENTS OF EGYPT, ETRURIA, AND
SOUTHERN ARABIA.

WITH ILLUSTRATIVE PLATES, A HARMONIZED TABLE OF ALPHABETS,
GLOSSARIES, AND TRANSLATIONS.

BY THE REV. CHARLES FORSTER, B.D.,

ONE OF THE SIX PREACHERS OF THE CATHEDRAL OF CANTERBURY,
AND RECTOR OF STISTED, ESSEX;
HONORARY MEMBER OF THE LITERARY SOCIETY:

AUTHOR OF
"MAHOMETANISM UNVEILED,"

AND OF
"THE HISTORICAL GEOGRAPHY OF ARABIA."

And the whole earth was of one language, and of one speech.

GENESIS



Part I

LONDON:

RICHARD BENTLEY, NEW BURLINGTON STREET.

1851.

For

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Πρῶτον μὲν πάντων παρακαλῶ τοὺς μέλλοντας ἐντυγχάνειν τῇδε τῇ βίβλῳ, ἵνα μετὰ πάσης προσοχῆς καὶ ἐπιμελείας τὴν ἀνάγνωσιν ποιήσωνται, καὶ μὴ παρέργως αὐτὴν διαδραμεῖν.—COSMAS INDICOPLEUSTES.

“Rude societies have language, and often copious and energetic language; but they have no scientific grammar, no definitions of nouns and verbs, ~~no names for declensions, moods, tenses, and voices.~~”—MACAULAY'S *History of England*.

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DEDICATION.

TO

SIR ROBERT HARRY INGLIS, BART.,

M. P. FOR THE UNIVERSITY OF OXFORD,

PRESIDENT OF THE LITERARY SOCIETY,

&c. &c. &c.

My dear Friend,

IN former publications I enjoyed one advantage which I possess no longer. They were brought out under the countenance and sanction, successively, of two prelates of the Church, whose authority gave a claim on public attention to any work, however previously unknown the name of the author. While Bishop Jebb, or Archbishop Howley, lived, I felt that the fruits of my studies were the property of the superiors to whom, under Providence, I was accountable for the disposal of my time. They are gone to their reward: but there is a friend still left, to whom I can look

with propriety to occupy their place in a Dedication. Allow me, then, to inscribe the following pages with the name, and to place them under the protection, of the friend, whose intimacy has been a chief honour and happiness of my life; and to take this opportunity of preserving, so far as my imperfect ability can preserve, the memory of a friendship of three and thirty years.

The subject of the present work was suggested by a discovery, made most unexpectedly, and published in a former work, "The Historical Geography of Arabia." To that work, and its Appendix, I must refer the reader for the account and decyphering of the ~~great Hamyaritic~~ inscription, found on the rock of Hisn Ghorâb, a port of Hadramaut, on the coast of Southern Arabia. At present I shall only mention, that the decyphering of that monument stands now corroborated by physical facts, and by the main features of the locality. The inscription-stone is "*white*" (as Al-Kazwîni describes it), a huge block of lead-white stone or marble, being the single stone of the kind or colour in the face of a black, or rather reddish-brown, cliff. The inscription itself is executed with a depth and beauty, and in a style so peculiar, that it can be

described appropriately only by the French term *unique*. It is the only inscription at Hisn Ghoráb, a line or two on the summit, by the same hand, excepted. And the port, over the entrance into whose ruined fortress it stands, is the sole port for shipping on the coast east of Aden; the first port, after Aden, for above two hundred miles. It is the only point where a castle could have stood; the intermediate coast affording only sandy beaches on which the Arab boats run on shore for the night. It is moreover the first port of Hadramaut next Aden, conformably with Al-Kazwīnī's description of his first Adite castle.

These particulars I state on the authority of officers of the Indian navy, and of one of the visitors to Hisn Ghoráb itself, the officer who conveyed the original discoverer of its inscription, Lieutenant Cruttenden, I. N., to re-examine the place, in consequence of my publication; and who, on his return to England, did me the honour to visit me, for the purpose of giving the information which inspection of the locality could alone supply. Lieutenant Berthon's account of the place, and its confirmations of Al-Kazwīnī, will appear in full in the proper place.

The identity of form of some Hisn Ghorâb characters with characters of Sinai and Egypt, led me to test, experimentally, the sameness of the powers; and the results justified the extension of this experimental process to other characters, of other alphabets, similarly identical in their forms with the characters of Egypt and Sinai. A Harmony of primeval alphabets, each letter of which (in the principal idioms) had been first verified by experimental decyphering, was the final result of these investigations. The Harmony is now before the reader in the accompanying table: the decypheringments will be found in the body of the present work.

In this connection it remains ~~only to submit~~ respectfully for the guidance of students of this work, two rules of decypheringment by which, throughout it, I have been guided myself: the one, as a first principle for the recovery of lost alphabets; the other, as a first principle for the division of words in unknown inscriptions: —

1. That, in comparing unknown with known alphabets, letters of the same known forms be assumed to have the same known powers.
2. That the old Arabic being here considered as

the primeval language, and the Arabic consisting mostly of trilateral roots, the principle of biliteral or trilateral roots be always acted on, in subdividing into words the undivided inscriptions.

In stating these rules, it is my object to invite qualified readers, not to take on authority, but to examine for themselves. And I will venture to add, that, if any competent to consult the Arabic lexicon, instead of beginning by criticizing, will begin by using the Harmony of Alphabets on the principles above stated, they will soon be able to decypher for themselves; and thus to double the evidences, by anticipating many of the decypherments of pictorial inscriptions, from whatever quarter of the world, which have been already made, and which will appear hereafter, if it be so permitted, in future Parts of this work.

If our translations sometimes differ, it will be held in mind that so do the text and the marginal readings of the English Bible. Such differences must always be allowed for as inherent in the case. And the truth will often be brought out by them.

But the subject addresses itself not to the

learned only, but to the English reader. Sinai, especially, appeals to all who hold Revealed Religion dear. I have, therefore, given translations, not only of the inscriptions, but of their glossaries; in order that all English readers who take an interest in the subject may examine for themselves.

I cannot take leave without expressing my obligations to those who have contributed materials towards the present publication. To Sir William Page Wood, Her Majesty's Solicitor-General, I owe the communication, and liberty to avail myself, of the unpublished Travels of the late Capt. Frazer, R. A.: a Journal reflecting new and highly interesting lights on the Mosaic records, both from Sinai and Egypt. To John Godfrey, Esq., of Brook-House, Kent, I am largely indebted for the use of his valuable collections of Egyptian and Etruscan antiquities; and, still more, for a suggestion to which, under Providence, it is mainly owing that the work is now brought out. To Hughes Ingram, Esq., of Yorkshire, I have to acknowledge similar obligations, in the free loan of works on Etruria. To George Richmond, Esq., I am indebted for bringing the aids of high modern art to the elucidation of hieroglyphic figures. And

to John Murray, Esq., of Albemarle Street, I have to repeat the expression of my thanks for his renewed and liberal kindness in placing at my disposal for the work, Plates from some of the most valuable of his publications.

Other traits of friendship I might record, in proof that "there is a friend that sticketh closer than a brother." But it is sometimes the duty of friendship to refrain.

A few words, before I take leave, upon the *Harmony of Alphabets* prefixed to this work. This synopsis, has been formed, not theoretically, but, as I have already intimated, from a large induction of experiments made upon pictorial inscriptions (the results of which will be given as largely in the progress of the work): inscriptions in which the powers of characters could be ascertained by their occurrence, in the names of animals, or of other objects, decypherable by the Arabic, or in words explanatory of the action of the figures, on the principle of legends and devices. It has been arranged upon the principle that, in the oldest alphabets of the world, compared between themselves, identity of form in the characters implies identity of power, from their common nearness

to the one parent source. But that the alphabets of Greece and Rome, in which the primitive powers of so many characters have been altogether changed, however useful as subordinate helps, can never, without experimental verification, be safely admitted as authoritative guides for the recovery of the lost powers of the primeval alphabets of the East. This part of my subject, if spared to complete the plan, will be treated of in full in an Appendix. In the mean while, a calm reliance may be rested in, that the English public will grant that fair and impartial hearing, and will exercise that wise suspense of judgment, by which only "knowledge is enlarged," and without which it is impossible that justice can be done to the treatment of any subject, upon a new principle, or in an untrodden way.

I remain, my dear Sir Robert, your grateful and affectionate friend,

CHARLES FORSTER.

Stisted Rectory,
February 16, 1851.

TRACED ALPHABET OF THE SINAITIC INSCRIPTIONS.

A	n	i	i	l
B	a	z	z	b
C				
D	r	v		
Ee	n			
F	r	,		
G	:	z		
H	n	x = c		
I	m			
J	:	z		
K	d	s k		
L	y	j j l		
M	m	p		
N	i	o		
O	m	o		
P	e	f f f		
S	x r	t t t		
T	p	q q		
V	r			
X	w	s s s		
Z	m	t + t p n u		

PART I.

THE VOICE OF ISRAEL

FROM

THE ROCKS OF SINAI:

OR,

THE SINAITIC INSCRIPTIONS CONTEMPORARY RECORDS
OF THE MIRACLES AND WANDERINGS
OF THE EXODE.

ADVERTISEMENT TO THE READER.

IN the readings and renderings of inscriptions in the following pages, the Author, after an inquiry pursued for the last seven years, submits the results of his own investigations and impressions ; always subject to the corrections of fuller examination and experience. It will be remembered, at the same time, that, if the Sinaïtic inscriptions be once proved and admitted to have been the work of the Israelites, the antecedent presumption that they must contain records of events of the Exode becomes of the strongest kind ; and gives great value and significance to any pictorial representations on the rocks of Sinai, however rude, corresponding in character with those events.

DIRECTIONS TO THE BINDER.

Plate I.	-	-	-	-	to face page	43
II.	-	-	-	-	-	56
III.	-	-	-	-	-	58
IV.	-	-	-	-	-	90
V.	-	-	-	-	-	95
VI.	-	-	-	-	-	138
VII.	-	-	-	-	to precede p.	163





THE VOICE OF ISRAEL

FROM THE

ROCKS OF SINAI.

IT is now somewhat more than thirteen hundred years, since a merchant of Alexandria, Cosmas by name, from his voyages to India surnamed Indicopleustes, visited on foot the peninsula of Sinai*; and was the first to discover, or at least to make known to the world, the extraordinary fact of the existence, upon all the rocks at the various resting-stations throughout that uninhabitable wilderness, of numerous inscriptions in a then, as now, unknown character and language. By certain Jews, who formed part of his company, and who professed to understand

* If this visit took place, as seems not unlikely, at the time of his trade-voyage from Elath (Akaba) to Adule on the African coast, the date is fixed by Cosmas himself: Παρόντι οὖν μοι ἐν τοῖς τόποις ἐκεῖνοις πρὸ τούτων τῶν ἐνιαυτῶν εἴκοσι πέντε, πλέον ἢ ἑλαττον, ἐν τῇ ἀρχῇ τῆς βασιλείας Ἰουστινίου τῶν Ῥωμαίων βασιλέως.—*Cosmas Indicopleust. ap. Collect. Nov. Patr., tom. ii. p. 140.* Justin was proclaimed Emperor July 9, 518. The voyage to Adule, consequently, took place *about* A. D. 518, 519.

and interpret their meaning, these inscriptions, Cosmas further relates, were assigned to the age of Moses and the Exode, and ascribed to their own ancestors, the ancient Israelites, during their wanderings "in the desert of Sin." The high antiquity implied by this Jewish tradition, was corroborated to the eye of the Egyptian voyager by a most remarkable circumstance : namely, that many of the inscriptions in question were upon broken-off rocks, lying scattered over the vallies ; rocks which had fallen, at unknown periods, from the cliffs above, self-evidently by reason of the wear and tear of the winter torrents in the lapse of ages.* For as it is now ascertained that the inscriptions upon the fallen fragments still in being, in several instances are found inverted, it follows that the writing had been engraved before the rocks were broken off.† This admitted fact, though unnoticed by him, it

* "In universum, inscriptiones temporis injuria læsæ sunt : in primis rapidis fluviarum hibernarum, quibus siccæ illæ valles nonnunquam in fluvios mutantur."—*E. F. F. Beer, Studia Asiatica*, Introd. p. viii. : Lipsiæ, 1840.

† "Magnus inscriptionum numerus reperitur in saxis in viam delapsis. Hæc, aut delapsæ sunt *postquam inscriptiones factæ sunt*, unde nonnunquam hæc *situ inverso* descriptæ sunt."—*Ib.* The fact of the inverted inscription speaks for itself. The assumption that those not inverted were, therefore, written subsequently to the fall of the rocks on which they are engraved, is perfectly gratuitous. The just inference from the two phenomena is, that, in their fall, some inscribed rocks rolled over, while others slid down.

is essential to keep in view, if we would estimate at its real value the relation of Cosmas. In other times, it might well be presupposed that the first announcement of this startling discovery must, at once, have attracted the curiosity of the learned world, and engaged the serious attention of the Christian Church. But in the reign of Justinian, the world and the Church were occupied by other matters than researches into the far-distant past. The minds of men, buried in the labyrinths of controversy, or busied in the enactment of codes of human law, had little leisure, and less encouragement, for entering on an inquiry, which might, by possibility, throw light upon "the Law Divine."

The curious report of the Egyptian merchant lay, accordingly, unnoticed in his work entitled "Christian Topography." Nor was its repose disturbed from the sixth, until the commencement of the eighteenth century of our era; when the geographical treatise in which it occurs (Cosmas's only extant work) was published for the first time, with a Latin version and notes, in the year 1707, by the celebrated Montfaucon. So total, in the long interval, had been the neglect of inquiry, that the editor was compelled to rest his belief in the existence of the Sinaïtic inscriptions, wholly upon the unimpeachable

fideliſty of Cosmas; which he moſt juſtly pronounced to be beyond all queſtion.* For this honourable teſtimony to his author's good faith,

* Since writing the above paſſage, I have recovered what would appear to be the *autograph record*, by Cosmas himſelf, of his viſit to the peninſula of Sinai. In looking over the plates of Sinaïtic inſcriptions, published by Pococke, my eye was caught by the proper name Κοſμαν, in the Greek inſcription No. 10, at the cloſe of its ſecond line. Upon cloſer inſpection it was manifeſt that the firſt line, and the laſt two lines of this inſcription, were detached fragments, in different handwritings; while the ſecond and third lines compoſed, apparently, a ſeparate record, complete in itſelf. This record was the uſual pilgrim invocation, ſo often found at Sinai, aſking the prayers of ſucceeding pilgrims. The inſcription was found and copied by Pococke near the ſummit of Mount St. Catharine, in the grotto where Moſes is ſaid to have faſted forty days. He deſcribes it "as an imperfect Greek inſcription, *which ſeems to be older than the beginning of the Muhometan religion.*" The following is a fac-ſimile of the two centre lines: —

ΜΝΗΕΤΗΘΗΚΟΖΜΑΝ
ΤΟΥΝΤΕΒΔ...ΝΑΥΤΙΟΥ

μνησ τηθ? Κοſμαν

του 'ν τεβδ....ναυτιου

Remember Cosmas,
The voyager to Thibet.

The characters ΤΕΒΔ, not forming any known Greek word, ſeemed at firſt enigmatic. The enigma ſeemed ſolvable by the proper name *Thibet* (*arabice*, *تَيْب*), the ultima Thule, it hence would ſeem, of Cosmas's travels; who, in this inſcription, if correctly aſcribed to him, ſtyle himſelf *τεβδναυτης*, as afterwards, in his work, *ινδικοπλευστης*. The Greek here is moſt barbarous; but ſo, alſo, is that of all theſe Greek inſcriptions. If it be his, he learned to write better Greek in his monaſtery. The literate monk may, in youth, have been an illiterate merchant or ſhipman (*ναυτης*): perhaps the latter. Poverty ſeems indicated by a *cedſtrian caravan*.

* Κοſμαν, as a genitive, is authorized by an Apamean medal, του αγωνοθετου Αρτιμαν.

Montfaucon, in the true spirit of supercilious scholarship, indemnifies himself by indulging in reflections on his credulity, and by contemptuously setting aside, without pausing to examine, the assigned date and origin of the inscriptions themselves.*

To this point an Irish prelate, Dr. Robert Clayton, Bishop of Clogher, had the honour of being the first to direct public attention, by his publication of the manuscript Itinerary of the journey from Cairo to Mount Sinai of the Prefetto of Egypt, and by his munificent offer of the sum of five hundred pounds to the traveller who should copy, and bring to Europe, the inscriptions of the Wady Mokatteb, or "written valley;" which (though the opposite of credulous in his tone of mind) he believed and pronounced to be the work of the Israelites of the Exode.

Bishop Clayton's praise-worthy efforts to awaken attention to the subject at home, were (in verification of the maxim that an effort never

* "De hac universa Cosmæ relatione, Montefalconius editor, qui nondum compererat ad montem Sinai inscriptiones re vera esse servatas (parva enim et imperfecta etiam tum erat fama earum et notitia) bene hæc observavit: Quæ de visis a se inscriptionibus hujusmodi refert Cosmas, a nemine sueto in dubium vocanda: nam fide dignus ac sincerus scriptor est, si quis alius. An vero inscriptiones illæ veterum Hebræorum in deserto oberrantium fuerint, id *sagaci lectori* æstimandum mitimus. Nos sane Cosmam Hebræorum mendacio deceptum probabilius existimamus." — *Montfaucon ap. Beer*, Introd. p. xiv.

is lost) soon after followed up in the East by the enterprize of Dr. Richard Pococke (afterwards Bishop of Ossory), the first European traveller who visited the peninsula of Sinai with the object of examining and taking copies of its inscriptions. By the publication of Pococke's Travels, and of a paper from the pen of the eccentric Edward Wortley Montague in No. 65. of the Transactions of the Royal Society, learned Europe at length was put in possession of copies of a few of those mysterious records of the past, and obtained the first specimens of the unknown characters employed in them. Some slight additions were subsequently contributed by Niebuhr and others. But adequate materials for the alphabet remained a desideratum, until, in the year 1820, they were happily supplied by Mr. G. F. Gray*, whose collection of 177 fairly copied Sinaitic inscrip-

* Now the Rev. G. F. Gray. The ingenious device employed successfully by this gentleman and his fellow-traveller, an Italian artist, to gain an opportunity of making their copies, was thus described to me by a friend of Mr. Gray, by whose permission the incident is given. Finding all efforts vain to induce their Arabs to stop for this purpose, they privately agreed, on reaching the station beside the Wady Mokatteb inscriptions, where they were to halt for the night, to loose the camels from their picquets while the guides slept, and let them wander over the desert. At day-break the Arabs missed their camels, and went off in quest of them; while, during their absence of some hours, Mr. Gray and his companion quietly and uninterruptedly took copies of all the inscriptions within their reach. The anecdote may furnish a useful hint to future travellers, not at Sinai only, but wherever inscriptions similarly located may occur.

tions appeared in 1830, in Vol. II. Part I. of the Transactions of the Royal Society of Literature.

The appearance of this more abundant harvest (the fruit, like most that had preceded it, of British enterprise) at length reawakened to the nearly forgotten subject the slumbering curiosity of Europe, and engaged the studious attention of one of the first orientalists of Germany. The result was the publication, in the year 1840, by the late Professor E. F. F. Beer, of Leipsic (the friend and fellow-labourer of Gesenius), in his work entitled "*Studia Asiatica*," of a collection styled by him *Inscriptionum Centuria*, or "*A Century of Sinaïtic Inscriptions*;" comprizing a selection of examples from Pococke, Montague, and Niebuhr, to Coutelle, Rozière, Seetzen, Burckhardt, Gray, Laborde, Lord Prudhoe (now Duke of Northumberland), and Major Felix. To this Collection (the originals engraved in 16 Plates, and his versions printed in Hebrew characters) Professor Beer prefixed an Introduction, an Alphabet, and his own translations.

From this short account of the publication, we will now pass at once to the principles of investigation on which the author proceeded, and the conclusions at which he arrived: inasmuch as the simple statement of these principles and conclusions will best prepare the way for the widely

different principles adopted, and the wholly opposite conclusions arrived at, in the present work.

Following in the steps of Montfaucon, Professor Beer sets out with discarding, as unworthy of note or comment, the belief of Cosmas, and the affirmation of the Jews who accompanied him, as to the Israelitish origin of the inscriptions in the Wady and Djebel Mokatteb: records which he, in his turn, asserts to be of Christian origin, and of a date scarcely more than a century and a half prior to the age and voyage of Indicopleustes himself.

It is essential to the subject, and due to the memory of the only scholar who has hitherto treated it, to examine the steps by which our author reaches these inferences. We will begin with his own statement of the numerical amount, and topographic extent, of the inscriptions themselves.

“The inscriptions are found in the neighbourhood of Mount Sinai; or, to speak more accurately, in the vallies and hills, which, branching out from its roots, run towards the north-west, to the vicinity of the eastern shore of the Gulf of Suez: insomuch that travellers now-a-days from the monastery of Mount Sinai to the town of Suez, whatever route they take (*for there are many*), will see these inscriptions upon the rocks

of most of the vallies through which they pass, to within half a day's journey, or a little more, of the coast. Besides these localities, similar inscriptions are met with, and those in great numbers, on Mount Serbal, lying to the south of the above-named routes; as also, but more rarely, in some vallies to the south of Mount Sinai itself.¹*

“But the valley which, beyond all the rest, claims special notice, is that which stretches from the neighbourhood of the eastern shore of the Gulf of Suez, for the space of three hours' journey [from six to seven miles], in a southern direction. Here, to the left of the road, the traveller finds a chain of steep sandstone rocks†, *perpendicular as walls*, which afford shelter, at mid-day and in the afternoon, from the burning rays of the sun. These, beyond all beside, contain a vast multitude of tolerably well-pre-

* Throughout this work the figures refer to the notes at the end of each Number.

† A material beyond all others, from its softness, its redness, and its indisposedness to flake off, alike fitted to receive, exhibit, and preserve the inscriptions. It has been observed to the author by a friend, that, while the inscriptions on granite in Egypt had often perished owing to the scaling off of the outer surface, those on sandstone, in the quarries of Masara, are as fresh as if executed yesterday. Sinai repeats this experience. Burckhardt describes the inscriptions upon the granite rocks of Serbal as mostly illegible; while those in the Wady Mokatteb are very generally perfect. The material, it appears, is that best suited to realize Job's aspiration, xix. 23.

served inscriptions; whence this valley has obtained the name of Wady Mokatteb, or 'the written valley.' Adjoining it is a hill, whose stones, in like manner, are covered with writing; and which bears the name of Djebel Mokatteb, or 'the written mountain.'

"Intermingled with the inscriptions, images and figures are of very frequent occurrence; all the work of art, if art it may be called; executed in the rudest style*, and evidently with the same instrument as that employed in executing the inscriptions: which figures prove themselves the production of the authors, by their very juxtaposition to the writing. These drawings most frequently represent camels and men. But for the sake of readers desiring more accurate information on the subject, we will comprize, in a bird's-eye view, those hitherto described, giving the precedence to the figures of most frequent occurrence:

* "The rude manner in which they are exhibited may well be supposed to be such as belonged to the time, *when men first began to inscribe on rocks* their abiding memorials." — Note from the "*Pictorial Bible*," p. 151., on Job xix. The engraver of the frontispiece of the present work made a similar remark to the author. His impression as an artist, when engaged upon it, was chiefly this, that the execution of the inscriptions betokened the infancy of society. Laborde's impression on the spot was the same: "These inscriptions come out clearly on the red ground of the rock; and the irregularity of the lines betrays the unskilfulness of the persons who confided their story to the custody of these rocks." — *Journey to Mt. Sinai*, p. 262.

“ Camels, standing, moving, running, laden. Mountain goats. Lizards. Serpents. Horses and mules. Dogs. Ostriches. Tortoises.

“ Men, standing, in motion ; lifting the hands to heaven ; looking down ; sitting, on camels, on laden camels, on horses, on mules ; standing, on camels, on horses ; leading camels ; armed with spears, swords, shields ; fighting ; drawing the bow (on foot, on horseback) ; hunting ; a man upon a cross, &c.

“ Which images those who copied the inscriptions describe as often difficult to distinguish from the letters. The truth is, that the original writers sometimes employed *images as parts of letters*, and, vice versâ, *images for groups of letters*.” *

From this well-drawn sketch of the numbers, extent; and pictorial or hieroglyphic character of the Sinaitic inscriptions, the author proceeds to the consideration of their probable origin and date.


Their origin he pronounces to be *Christian*, upon the strength of a single argument, or rather of a single character, which he denominates the emblem of the cross. “ Sometimes, either at the

* “ Quas imagines haud ita raro difficile a litteris discerni dicunt qui descripserunt. Ita factum est ut *litteras pro partibus imaginum*, et, vice versâ, *imagines pro litterarum symplegmate*, nonnunquam dederint.” — *Beer*, Introd. p. xii.

beginning, or at the end of inscriptions, are found crosses, in the form ; but they are of rare occurrence in the inscriptions hitherto transcribed, for they are observable only in the places cited underneath.* Yet rarer is another form of the cross † erect; which has the form of a semi-circle, to the right, in its upper limb, taken, probably, from the contracted Greek letters X and P, in order to express, at the same time, the Cross and the name of Christ. But upon the rocks themselves I suspect crosses to be more frequent than one might conjecture from the copies. For Montague *thinks* the authors to have been Christians; and Burckhardt *seems* to have held the same opinion, when he refers to the crosses. Which opinion, although, owing to their great simplicity, *there is nothing whatever to favour* in the arguments of the inscriptions

* “ Grey [Gray], inscr. 142. (nostra 42.), crux basi imposita. — Cf. Rozierii, inscr. 26. ; Montagu, vs. 12. ; Grey, inscr. 85., inscr. 86. and 111., ubi basi impositæ sunt. — Bis in inscr. Pocockii 59., et Seetzen 17., sed ita positæ ut suspicionem moveant.” — Beer, Introd. p. xii. notæ c, d.

† “ Grey, inscr. 11., et aliquoties ap. Labordium.” — *Ib.* nota e. Altogether, five certain and three dubious examples of what our author terms the “Crux Christiana,” out of some 200 inscriptions. Here are his

specimens :  Four of the five characters

are obviously monograms. The last, an Egyptian hieroglyphic, which he converts into the monogram for *Christ Jesus*! There remains one simple cross. I leave it to the reader to settle with Lovel, in “The Antiquary,” whether it is not “a narrow foundation to build a hypothesis on.”

heretofore explained by me, yet, on reading the characters, I seem to myself to discover something tending towards the confirmation of their Christian origin. For a certain sign occurs, which, although in form it does not differ from the letter *daleth* of this character, [my] interpretation of the inscription shows not to be a letter. That sign has the form of the Latin letter **Y**; and is observable, sometimes at the beginning, sometimes at the end, of the inscriptions. Compare, especially, incipitions 100 and 99, in our eleventh table, which consist of the same letters and lines, and to the former of which our figure is added, both at the beginning and at the end. On account of this location in the inscriptions, I think this sign to be the figure of the Christian Cross which was used in some countries; in which, perhaps, malefactors were commonly fixed on crosses formed in this figure of a fork. To which opinion it may seem an objection, that such a form of the Christian Cross is novel; and certainly I have found no evidence of its existence: but this I think of very slight moment.”*

Having thus disposed of the authorship, the

* The version reads so improbable that I give the original: “Cui sententiæ obstare videtur, quod talis Christianæ crucis figura [**Y** scil.] nova est: certe equidem *nullum ejus testem reperi*; sed hoc levioris momenti esse puto.” — Introd. p. xiii.

Professor proceeds to settle the date. "In my judgment, it appears that Cosmas saw in the neighbourhood of Mount Sinai, in various parts, and those numerous, many inscriptions on stones; which, both from their brevity, and the further proof arising from their great similarity to each other, I take to be the same with those very inscriptions of which we treat in this volume. But their real origin and meaning were little known in the time of Cosmas; for what he pronounces certain in this matter, is self-evidently false. Nor would this pious Christian have ascribed to Jews inscriptions wrought by Christian piety, had he known better.

"He appears to have conveyed the first tidings of the existence of these inscriptions to the learned of his own age*: whence we conjecture

* "Integra ejus verba afferimus, quum locus sit magnæ auctoritatis. Λαβόντες δὲ καὶ παρὰ τοῦ Θεοῦ τὸν νόμον ἐγγράφως, καὶ διδασκόμενοι γράμματα νεωστί, καὶ ὥσπερ παιδευτηρίῳ ἡσυχῇ ἐν τῇ ἐρήμῳ χρησάμενος ὁ Θεός, μ'. ἔτη εἶπεν αὐτοὺς καταλαβεῖν τὰ γράμματα. "Οθεν ἐστὶν ἰδεῖν, ἐν ἐκείνῃ τῇ ἐρήμῳ τοῦ Σιναΐου ὄρους, ἐν πάσαις καταπαύσεσι, πάντας τοὺς λίθους τῶν αὐτόθι, τοὺς ἐκ τῶν ὕδρων ἀποκλωμένους, γεγραμμένους γράμμασι γλυπτοῖς Ἑβραϊκοῖς. ὥς αὐτοὺς ἐγὼ πεζούσας τοὺς τόπους μαρτυρῶ. Ἄτινα καὶ τινες Ἰουδαῖοι ἀναγνόντες διηγούντο ἡμῖν, λέγοντες γεγράφθαι οὕτως· ἅπερσις [ἅπαρσις] τοῦδε ἐκ φυλῆς τῆςδε, ἔτει τῷδε, μηνὶ τῷδε· καθὰ καὶ παρ' ἡμῖν πολλάκις τινὲς ἐν ταῖς ξενίαις γράφουσιν. Αὐτοὶ δὲ, καὶ ὡς νεωστὶ μαθόντες γράμματα, συνεχῶς κατεχρῶντο, καὶ ἐπλήθυνον γράφοντες, ὥστε πάντας τοὺς τόπους ἐκείνους μεστοὺς εἶναι γραμμάτων Ἑβραϊκῶν γλυπτῶν, εἰς ἔτι καὶ νῦν σαζομένων."*

a "Preserved to this day." The expression demonstrates their *archaic appearance* in the time of Cosmas.

the date of the inscriptions to be very little prior to the age of Cosmas himself.*

“Whether the figure of the Christian Cross, **Y**, which in our inscriptions is more frequent than **†**, could have continued in use, as well as the other form, long after the time of Constantine, when it is so well known that both the temples, the military ensigns and shields, and the imperial coins themselves, were ornamented with the figure of the Cross, I doubt. Therefore I think that the greater part of these inscriptions were engraved in the fourth century.

“About this period, the custom among Christians of making pilgrimages to the sacred lo-

δια τοὺς ἀπίστους, ὡς ἔγωγε οἶμαι. Ἐξὸν δὲ τῷ βουλομένῳ ἐν τοῖς τόποις γενέσθαι καὶ θεάσασθαι, ἢ γοὺν ἐρωτῆσαι καὶ μαθεῖν περὶ τούτου, ὡς ἀλήθειαν εἴπομεν. Πρώτως οὖν Ἑβραῖοι, παρὰ τοῦ Θεοῦ σοφισθέντες, καὶ γράμματα διὰ τῶν λίθινων πλακῶν ἐκείνων παραλαβόντες, καὶ μεμαθηκότες, μὲν ἔτη ἐν τῇ ἐρήμῳ, γειτνιώσι τοῖς Φοίνιξι παραδεδώκασιν κατ' ἐκεῖνο καιροῦ, πρῶτον Κάδμῳ τῷ Τυρίων βασιλεῖ, ἐξ ἐκείνου παρέλαβον Ἕλληνες^a, λοιπὸν καθ' ἑξῆς πάντα τὰ ἔθνη.” — *Cosmæ Indicopleustæ Topograph. Christiana*, ap. *Montfaucon, Coll. Nov. Patr.*, &c., t. ii. p. 206.; and ap. *Beer, ut supr.* pp. 3, 4.

* “Ipse primus inscriptionum harum nuntium viris eruditissimæ ætatis tradidisse videtur. Unde conjicimus ætatem harum inscriptionum *haud ita brevi superiorem esse ævo Cosmæ.*” The language, consequently, must have utterly perished, and its characters must have been totally forgotten, in one or two life-times! The scepticism which strains at gnats, has a marvellous aptitude for swallowing camels.

^a The Punic and Greek characters in the Sinaïtic inscriptions were apparently recognized by Cosmas; and, if referred to their proper alphabets, would have yielded the true interpretation.

calities, principally to Jerusalem, in expectation of seeing miracles, and from religious motives, was greatly on the increase; insomuch that, towards the end of this century, Gregory, Bishop of Nyssen, judged it necessary to write against the practice in a separate treatise. That Mount Sinai should have been visited at that period by the inhabitants of Palestine or Syria, is, indeed, scarcely credible. Certainly we have no proof whatever of their doing so; though we do not deny that Helena, the mother of Constantine, journeyed to that mountain, and there erected a sanctuary, as the traditions of the Monastery of the Transfiguration allege. But it may very well have chanced that this appetite for visiting the sacred localities may have kindled, in some tribes of Arabia Petræa, a like desire of frequenting, from pious motives, for a time, Mount Sinai, and the vallics which witnessed the great miracles of Moses.

“ The only remaining question is, the space of time within which these inscriptions were engraved. The internal evidence of the writing is so uniform, that *I doubt whether the oldest can be parted from the most recent by an interval of more than a single age.* Those, however, who are un-conversant in paleography, should be forewarned against being drawn into an opposite opinion

by ill-preserved or ill-copied inscriptions, both Sinaïtic and Arabic.²* To those who consider these as holding a middle term, or as marking the change effected in written characters in the course of ages, I answer, that inscriptions of this kind are inexplicable from their corruptness, and, therefore, from them no conclusion can be drawn; but, rather, we must beware lest inscriptions should be confounded with each other, which are separated by an interval of a thousand years or more."

Having thus settled the date to his own satisfaction, the author passes, lastly, to the consideration of their probable origin; which, upon the grounds which follow, he decides to be Nabathæan. "The question arises, Who were the people who executed these inscriptions?—a question of moment, since by its solution may at last be brought to light the region in which this character and language was formerly in use. In fact, as I have already intimated, I can have no doubt that Arabia Petrea was that region,

* The truth is, that the modern Arabic alphabet contains many characters adopted from primitive inscriptions at Sinai, in Egypt, and in other parts. In a single rock inscription from Hadramaut, bearing all the marks of high antiquity, I find, amidst the Hamyaritic, from eight to ten Arabic characters, so perfectly formed that they would serve as models to cast types from. This identity proves that the Nishki characters now in use were borrowed, not invented. Upon this subject, see an important paper by M. Sylvestre de Sacy, in the final note 2.

since I see no other which can be put in competition with it. Here, in the ages immediately preceding our era, existed that people vulgarly known to the Greeks and Romans under the name of Nabathæans; a people wealthy, skilled in the arts, and flourishing in commerce; at first independent, and under their own kings — afterwards, by Trajan, subjected to Rome. Of this people and kingdom the capital was Petra, whose splendid ruins have at length been discovered and delineated in our days. But as to the character and language in general use in this kingdom, and in western Arabia Petræa, of these no monuments whatever remain to us.*

* In this statement Pr. Beer is in error. Messrs. Irby and Mangles discovered a genuine Nabathæan inscription at Petra, carved deep on rock, in five long lines. It was copied by these gentlemen, but their copy, unfortunately, was not preserved. After several fruitless attempts to procure another copy of this unique monument, I was unexpectedly favoured by a friend with the fac-simile of an inscription on rock, found by the late Capt. Frazer, R. A., in the Wadi Suttoun Bedtha, near Petra, which, on inspection, proved to be the five-line inscription mentioned by Irby and Mangles. It is remarkable, in disproof of Beer's theory, that the characters in this indubitable Nabathæan monument, though belonging to the same alphabet, are differently and far more regularly formed and executed than those in any of the inscriptions west of Sinai. Captain Frazer perceived, and points out this diversity, in his notice of the Petra inscription: "Inscription from the Um Amdan, in the Wadi Suttoun Bedtha. The inscription is between the two centre columns [of a monument with a façade of four columns, about 20 feet from the ground], about nine feet long, and perfectly preserved. The writing bears a strong resemblance to those I saw east of Sinai, between which and those on the west, as at Wady Mokatteb, and Wady Alleyat, there is always a certain difference observable." — Extract from unpublished Journal.

“This lacuna in paleography and philology I consider to be now filled up by our inscriptions. I have no means, indeed, of demonstrating that their authors sprung from those tribes which properly constituted the kingdom of the Nabathæans; but it will readily, I hope, be granted me, that these inscriptions, if not perhaps appertaining to the people of that kingdom, may well be attributed to tribes adjoining, and so akin to it, that their dialect would scarcely differ from the idiom of the Nabathæans in any respect, beyond the admixture of a few Arabisms, and thus would give no very imperfect notion of that idiom. But that the writing can have been the writing of any but the Nabathæans, I greatly doubt; for the free drawing and bold conjunction of the letters are such as I find upon the sculptured rocks of no people of that or of an earlier age, evincing the people to whom these inscriptions owe their origin to have written much and calligraphically, and therefore to have been highly cultivated and flourishing as a commonwealth.”*

* There is no credulity like the credulity of scepticism, whether theological or philological. Pr. Beer determines the Sinaïtic inscriptions to be Nabathæan, and their date the middle of the fourth century. Now, as, in the age of Cosmas, all knowledge and tradition of their characters and contents appear to have been lost among the Arabs of the district by whom he was sure to be attended, it results that the Nabathæan

Such is the account given by the late Professor Beer of the origin, date, and authorship of those mysterious records, which, by his own admission, cover miles of cliffs, and are found engraved on the fallen rocks, in all the vallies of the peninsula north-west of Mount Sinai; in other words, *on the acknowledged route of Moses and the Israelites from the Red Sea to Mount Sinai*.*

The slightness of his premises, and the inconsequence of his conclusions†³, might well have

language and letters (being those of the most polished and powerful people of Arabia) must have flourished, and become unknown, between A. D. 350 and A. D. 520.

* "My view of the Wady Mokatteb is taken from the south-east. — The caravan which is seen in the distance is approaching from Suez by Wady Taibé and the coast. — My caravan stopped in a small plain near the sea, where it is said to have been passed by the Israelites. We then ascended Wady Taibé, and, passing near the Mara of Scripture (Ain Howara), we traversed the great plain which occupied the Israelites the first three days of their journey. Suez lay in front." — *Laborde*, p. 263. Thus it is to a locality on the western, or Egyptian, side of the peninsula of Sinai, and situated, therefore, unavoidably on the line of march of the Israelites, that pilgrims unknown to history and tradition are to be imported from its eastern, or Arabian, side, in order to explain, or rather explain away, the unparalleled phenomena of the Wady and Djebel Mokatteb.

† The rude execution of the characters of the Wady Mokatteb inscriptions in dotted scratches, and the facility of their execution on the face of its soft sandstones, are mainstays of Pr. Beer's argument (if argument it must be called), for their being the productions of passing pilgrims. When out of the Wady Mokatteb, however, he is not "out of the wood." His difficulties are only commencing. The reasoning which, amidst its sandstones, may pass with some, will not hold amidst the *granite* rocks of Serbal. The same characters, in the same handwritings, are to be found

spared those who come after him the task of analyzing this account in detail, had not the favourable reception which it appears to have experienced, not in Germany only, but elsewhere, rendered a strict examination of it indispensable, in order, by anatomizing and clearing away a misleading theory, to prepare the way for the recovery and establishment of the truth. To this preliminary object I must now, therefore, address myself.


1. The single ground upon which the Professor's theory rests is, as already stated, the occasional occurrence of a character †, which he assumes to be the sign of "the Christian Cross." The occurrence of this sign, however, being too infrequent alone to sustain his hypothesis, this ingenious writer proceeds to strengthen it by the discovery, in another character, Y, of a second form of the cross. With singular simplicity he confesses, at the same time, that for this form he can produce no pre-



upon the rocks and stones of this lofty and nearly inaccessible mountain, from its base to its summit, and in greatest numbers upon its highest peak. See Burckhardt's account ap. final note 3. One of its latest visitors thus describes the phenomena: "Huge masses and débris of *red granite*, that, rent from Serbal's side, and hurled down the rugged walls of the Wady, seemed to oppose our progress and efforts to ascend. *It is always on this red rock* that the inscriptions, which were numerous here, are found."—*Capt. Frazer's MS. Journal.*

cedent, that it is unexampled and unknown in church history. Undaunted, however, by this consideration, he believes it to be the cross, because, in some parts, the malefactor's cross *may* have been so constructed, or furcated instead of transverse; and because, prior to the age of Constantine, when the transverse form † (as he freely admits) was the only form of the Christian cross, as emblazoned on the ensigns, and shields, and coins of the empire, the furcated form Y *may* have existed somewhere, and among some Christian people, as a sign of the cross.

Now, as the absurdity of learned hallucinations such as these has not prevented their finding learned admirers, it becomes necessary for the truth-sake to bring this argument from the sign of the cross to an issue. It is clear that none who subscribe this discovery of the sign of the cross in the Sinaitic inscriptions, and who thence infer with Beer the Christianity of their authors, can, consistently at least, object to the extension of the argument. If the occurrence of the character be a ground of argument at all, it ought to be so everywhere.

To begin with the oldest country, and the earliest records of mankind, Egypt, heathen Egypt, discloses Professor Beer's sign of "the Christian cross" upon her monuments, from the

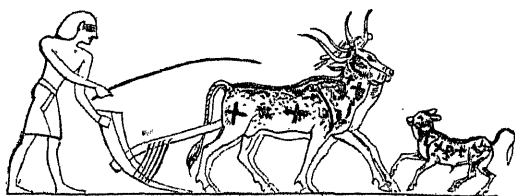
sands of Rosetta to the upper cataracts of the Nile. The character , for example, which, on its single occurrence at Sinai, appears to the heated imagination of this writer, at once the sign of the Christian cross and the monogram of the sacred names Christ Jesus, is, by the plain English common sense of Mr. Gray, pronounced "an Egyptian hieroglyphic;"* and is neither more nor less than that most frequent character of the hieroglyphics, so well known by the names of the "Crux Ansata" and of "the Sacred Tau."

From Egypt to whatever quarter of the globe we turn, to the old world or to the new, to Assyria, to Bactria, to Etruria, to Central America, this sign of the cross reappears on the monuments and in the inscriptions of every heathen land. And while Professor Beer adduces, from Sinai, the forms  or , as indubitable forms of "the Christian Cross," and irrefragable proofs of the Christianity of the authors of the Sinaitic inscriptions, I can produce, from heathen Bactria, the figure of an Indo-Macedonian king, Azes, B. C. 140, mounted upon the double-humped Bactrian camel, and bearing in his right hand a cross, which might have graced the hand

* "It is to be observed that there is an Egyptian hieroglyphic of precisely this form."—*Gray*, II.

of a standard-bearer of Constantine, or of a warrior Bishop of the Crusades. The key to the whole mystery is shortly and simply this: the character misnamed the cross, is the letter *t*; the Sinai *t*, the Egyptian *t**, the old Hebrew *t*, the Assyrian *t*, the Bactrian *t*, the Etruscan *t*, the Ethiopic *t*, or (to come nearer home) the plain, honest English *t*, the oldest at once, and latest, form of the letter, in the most widely parted alphabets of the world.

* The Egyptian character in the form of a cross, if we include the *crux ansata*, or "sacred *tau*," is one of the most prominent and frequent of the hieroglyphics. Its power as *t* is curiously demonstrable from comparison of a definition in the Arabic lexicons with the subjoined wood-cut from "Wilkinson's Egypt." Under the root *توي*, *tiwa*, one definition seemed unintelligible, unless on the assumption that it had its origin in a usage: viz. "*توي*, Signum in animalis femore vel collo impressum crucis formâ." "*Tiwa*, a mark made on the neck or thigh of an animal in the form of a cross." The annexed vignette proves and illustrates the



usage whence this definition took its rise; viz. that of *t*-eeing animals, or branding them with the letter *T*. We see here the brand of *t*, as mentioned in the definition of *tiwa*, on the *neck*, *thigh*, and *side*, of the cow and calf. The mark of "the Prophet's fingers," is now the brand upon the hind quarter of Arab horses of the Koheyle breed.

2. In his theory of the Nabathæan origin of the Sinaïtic inscriptions, this author has most unaccountably closed his eyes to the noted fact, a fact fully brought out in his own statements, that the great mass of these inscriptions occurs, not on any of the routes from Arabia Petrea to Mount Sinai, but on the direct road from Mount Sinai to Suez and Egypt, and pre-eminently in the Wady and Djebel Mokatteb, on the coast road to Suez. The single known exception to this remark, the road from Djebel Mousa or Mount Hor to Akaba through the Wady Arabah, which has been described but very recently, is in the ascertained line of march of the Israelites, it being the only route open to them from Mount Hor to Akaba or Ezion-Geber.

But this very strange oversight is one only among the manifold difficulties in which Professor Beer's theory involves him. For example, while he invites his readers to believe, with him, those records to be the workmanship of Nabathæan pilgrims, or of Christian pilgrims of some kindred Arab tribes*, he frankly admits that, beyond

* Burekhardt, on the contrary, brings the authors of the inscriptions on Mount Serbal, and of a portion of those in the Wady and Djebel Mokatteb, from Egypt: "It is not at all impossible that the proximity of Serbal to Egypt may, at one period, have caused that mountain to be the Horeb of the pilgrims." — *Syria*, p. 609. His pilgrims, like Beer's, are imaginary; but his reference of the inscriptions to Egyptian pilgrims is made with his usual good sense, and quadrates with the truth.

his more than dubious sign of the cross, he has not an iota of evidence of any kind to countenance his conjecture. Again, when he refers their origin to these casual wanderers in the wilderness, to pilgrims, by his own confession, unknown to history or tradition, and invisible to every eye save his own ; and represents their execution as the amusement of his ideal travellers, in the heat of the day, during their halts under the shady resting-stations ; he confesses, on the one hand, that the inscriptions are numbered by thousands, and forgets, on the other hand, that the cliffs are described as clothed with them to heights attainable only by the aid of platforms or ladders from below, or of ropes and baskets from above ; heights which no passing voyagers, necessarily unprovided with such appliances, could by any possibility reach. It would be easy to multiply, from the Professor's treatise, examples of inconsistencies like these, but, for readers who, like the English reader, require consistency at least in an argument, and will refuse their confidence where consistency is not found, one more example may suffice. In one passage, we are told that the Sinai inscriptions, and pictorial representations, evidently belong to a people in the rudest state of society.⁴ In another passage, we are taught to admire, with the author, the freedom, bold-

ness, and beauty of the characters, as conclusively evincing the progress in wealth and commerce, and the consequent proficiency in the calligraphic art, of a people in a highly cultivated state.⁵

3. The date assigned to the inscriptions, the fourth century, is so irreconcilable with the laws of reason and analogy, that our only difficulty in dealing with it, lies in the difficulty always experienced in bringing argument to bear against assumption in the face of facts. Cosmas has described the inscriptions as wearing, early in the sixth century, all the hoar marks of dilapidation, consequent ordinarily upon the lapse of ages, and the waste of slow natural decay.* The inscription rocks, fallen fractured from the cliffs, were by him seen lying scattered over the vallies, precisely as they are to be seen lying scattered in the same vallies at the present day. To an ordinary observer, surely, this description would imply, that the signs of nature's ruin and

* "They are engraved upon the surface of a red sandstone, which receives a hard dark crust from the effect of the heat and weather. Very large fragments of the rock have fallen down into the valley, and are there found with some of the inscriptions upon them; and, in one place, the action of an occasional torrent [the bed of which Mr. Gray found entirely dry in March] has worn away about fourteen feet in height from the lower surface of the rock, *evidently since the inscriptions were made.*" — Gray, ap. *Transact. R. Soc. of Lit.*, vol. ii. parti. p. 147.

decay which Cosmas beheld, had as long *preceded* his time, as those which travellers to Mount Sinai now witness have confessedly *succeeded it*: the phenomena being alike the sure, though slow, work of the winter torrents, undermining the cliffs above. We are *certain* that the silent progress of this work of ruin has occupied nearly fourteen centuries *since* the days of Cosmas: why, then, may not the similar progress of decay which he beheld, have occupied twenty centuries *before*? * Not such, however, is the reasoning of

* The reluctance to admit the idea of a high antiquity in this case, resolves itself into causes altogether apart from the state of the evidences. Had the monuments been indubitably *heathen*, and the localities unconnected with events of Scripture history, would the same reluctance have appeared? The analogy of the treatment of all other antiquities by the learned show that it would not. The Israelitish origin claimed by Cosmas and his Jewish companions for the Sinaïtic inscriptions is dismissed by modern critics, not only without examination, but without a single ground of objection alleged. The sole ground of objection which could be alleged, would be antecedent presumptions, upon the score of improbability, against a date of so high antiquity. For P. Beer's negative objection, from their not being mentioned by any writer *before* the time of Cosmas, is about as worthy of notice, as one against their existence, from their not being mentioned *after* till the time of Montfaucon. Now, to test the value of the improbability on the score of antiquity, we will take a neighbouring and cognate case, that of heathen Egypt. Egypt, from the borders of Nubia to the mouths of the Nile, abounds with written monuments of as high, and of far higher antiquity. The hoar old age of the written stones of Ipsambul, of Elephantine, of Philæ, of Masara, of Thebes, has been admitted and enhanced by the veriest atheists of revolutionary France. The critic who would arraign, on the ground of antecedent improbability, the dates of three thousand, or of four thousand years, for Egyptian monuments and records, would be scouted, and scouted most justly, by the whole

Beer. While the fourteen centuries occupied in producing the one set of phenomena is a point inevitably conceded, he would allow, for the production of the other, the space only of 150 years.

Happily, however, for the truth, among the copies of Sinaitic inscriptions already procured, there are forthcoming some legible documents of unquestionable dates ; and of dates, at the same time, completely eversive of Professor Beer's hypothesis. Some few Greek, and one Latin inscription, from the Wady Mokatteb itself, are in our hands. The dates of these are self-evidently posterior, it may safely be added long posterior, to that of the unknown inscriptions, among the countless multitudes of which these

learned world. Away, then, with the shallow scepticism which would deny, on this sole ground, the coexistence, for a corresponding term of years, of the written records upon the rocks of Sinai : which would deny it for no other assignable or conceivable cause than this, — that, instead of being works of heathenism (like the Egyptian tablets in the Wady Maghara, whose antiquity none affect to dispute), the Sinaitic inscriptions were the work of God's chosen people ; a written witness against an unbelieving world to the end of time, that " Israel (of a truth) came out of Egypt." But, in the argument from analogy, Egypt stands not alone. For the recently recovered monuments of Assyria, the claim has been advanced of an antiquity ascending nearly to the confusion of tongues. And, upon fair proof, we are ready to admit it. Upon one tenth of the proof producible from Sinai, we might rationally receive the obelisk from Nimroud, now in the British Museum, as a monument of the son of Ninus, B. C. 2000, or as of a date of three thousand nine hundred years.

more recent superadditions are well-nigh lost. Their style of execution, moreover, in more than one instance, marks comparative recency; since, unlike all the unknown characters, in one at least of the Greek, and in the only Latin inscription, the characters are *cut*, not dotted out.* From these "little drops of light amidst a sea of darkness," I select two, because, within certain known limits, their dates are determinable: the one, Macedonian, belonging to the era of the Seleucidæ; the other, Roman, belonging, at the latest, to the age of Trajan. The Greek inscription, of which the first lines only are legible, reads thus:—

'ΚΑΚΟΝ ΓΕΝΟΣ { ΟΥΤΟΣ
 ΣΤΡΑΤΙΩΤΗΣ ΕΓΡΑΤΑ
 ΠΑΝΕΜΙΧΙ

The date from the Macedonian Calendar, the month Panemos, corresponding with our July †,

* "The whole of the original inscriptions are on the shady side of the valley. — The few that are found *on the opposite side* are in Latin [or Greek?]. The former are *all* executed with the same instrument, punched in a series of holes. The latter, and all the modern inscriptions, are *cut* with a different instrument, and in a different manner." — Gray, ap. *Transact. R. Soc. Lit.*, vol. ii. part i. p. 147.

† Πάνεμος· ὄνομα μηνὸς παρὰ Μακεδόσιν, ὃ Ἰούλιος. — *Suidas et Phavorinus* in voc.

fixes this record irrefragably in the era of the Seleucidæ. And the tone of the engraver, some Syro-Macedonian soldier, indicating his novel experience of the character of a wild and savage people, argues an early period in that famous epoch. At the latest, however, the date must be before Christ 85; in which year Antiochus XII., after traversing Judea, invaded Arabia, defeated the Nabathæans in a first encounter, but was killed in a second. The language of the inscription, expressive of the vexation of a foiled invader, harmonizing with this event, I am willing to adopt this lowest date, which gives to this Syro-Macedonian record an existence of 1930 years: in other words, a date more than four centuries prior to that assumed by Beer as the date of its unquestionable predecessors, the unknown Sinaitic inscriptions.

“The following Roman inscription (observes Mr. Gray) is perfect and plain — but *cut*, not dotted out.”

CESSENTSYRI
ANTE LATINOS
ROMANOS

This is the language of conquest; of the invader, in the hour of victory; of a Roman

soldier, in the pride of newly won empire, impelled, on first sight of the supposed *Syrian* inscriptions, to blot out, as it were, in one sweeping sentence, the records and the race. The name *Syri* would seem to refer to the wars of Rome with the Seleucidæ. But I am content, for my argument, to adopt the age of Trajan, the Roman conqueror of Arabia Petræa: a date which assigns to this inscription an existence of upwards of 1730 years.

Such is the undoubted antiquity of these comparatively modern records: while their unknown precursors, according to Professor Beer, cannot lay claim to an antiquity of more than fifteen centuries.

From consequences self-evident, and self-destructive like these, it is surely high time to return, and to resume the real facts of the case: facts which require only a fair and full re-statement, discarding all mere hypothesis, to conduct us to the conclusions plainly dictated, by the narrative of the Books of Moses, by the fundamental laws of history, and by the first principles of common sense. Before, however, we resume the facts, it may be well to notice one precious admission conceded by Beer; namely, that the genuine Sinaitic inscriptions bear upon their face, in the sameness of character of the hand-

writing, and the whole style of their execution, the clearest internal evidence of *the whole of them being the work of a single age or generation*.* This premised, we pass on to the phenomena.

Foremost among these is that so often stated by travellers, and so irrationally under-estimated, both by visitors of these sacred localities, and by critics at home,—the numbers, extent, and positions of the inscriptions: their numbers (in the Wady Mokatteb alone) being computed by thousands†; their extent by miles; and their positions above the vallies being as often measurable by fathoms as by feet. No difficulties of situation, no ruggedness of material, no remoteness of locality, has been security against the gravers of the one phalanx of mysterious scribes. The granite rocks of the almost inaccessible Mount Serbal, from its base to its summit, repeat the characters and inscriptions of the sandstones of the Mo-

* “Superest quæstio, quantum sit temporis spatium quo hæ inscriptiones factæ sunt. Scripturæ ratio interna tam est uniformis, ut antiquissimas earum a recentissimis intervallo quod *seculum* multum excedat dubitem.” — *Beer*, Introd. p. xv. Could words describe more accurately the “forty years” of the Exode?

† Lord Lindsay’s computation of those in the Wady Mokatteb alone: “We now entered the Wady Mokatteb, a spacious valley, bounded on the east by a most picturesque range of black mountains; but chiefly famous for the inscriptions from which it derives its name of the Written Wady: inscriptions, too (and here is the mystery), in a character which no one has yet deciphered. *There are thousands of them.*” — *Letters on Egypt, Edom, and the Holy Land*, vol. i. p. 274., 2nd edit.

katteb. The wild recesses of the Wady Arabah renew the phenomena in an opposite direction, and disclose them carried on to the extremity of the eastern head of the Red Sea ; while countless multitudes more may possibly lie still undiscovered, in the numerous vallies branching out from the roots of Sinai, and as yet, it would appear, unexplored. These circumstances, taken together, we might reasonably have thought would have barred at the threshold any theory, grounding itself upon the assumption of the inscriptions being the work, or pastime, of chance pilgrims or travellers ; and that within a given period of from thirty to forty years ; and by hands from the Arabian side, while the great mass of the inscriptions are found on the Egyptian side of the peninsula.*

But let us examine one point more closely, for it is a point of vital importance in this argument : the circumstance, namely, that very many of the inscriptions are found at heights which no chance voyagers could reach. Proof of this is presented to the eye in the frontispiece of the present work :

* " Extant hæ inscriptiones ad montem Sinai : vel accuratius, in val- libus collibusque qui inde ab ejus radicibus caurum versus siti sunt, usque ad littus orientale sinus Heroopolitani ; ita quidem, ut qui hodie a monasterio montis Sinai profiscuntur ad oppidum Suez, quameunque viam eligunt — *plures enim sunt*, — inscriptiones has videant in rupibus vallium plurimarum per quas ducuntur, usque ad eas regiones littoris quas dimidio et quod excedet itineris confecto attingunt." — *Beer*, Introd. pp. i. ii.

a view of the Wady Mokatteb from the south-east (the first which has been taken of it), by Count Leon Laborde, originally published in his "Journey through Arabia Petræa to Mount Sinai." In this drawing, if the scale of the heights be represented by that of the figures at their base, the reader will see cliffs of an altitude to defy the passing pilgrim, covered with inscriptions nearly to their summits.

Our next example shall be taken from the Djebel Mokatteb: a locality of which we have so often read, but which has not been described, and appears not to have been inspected, by any of our recent travellers. This "written mountain" is stated to contain an inscription in forty-one lines, the dimensions of which may be computed by the scale of the characters. The first line of this inscription (the only part of it yet copied) is styled by the Arabs, from the magnitude of its scale, "The Title." Its characters are described as measuring each six feet in length: those of the forty lines beneath it, as being each one foot long.* Now, allowing the necessary spacing

* This scale is guaranteed by a commensurate scale from Burckhardt, at Mount Serbal, not on sandstone, but on granite. "Just below the top, I found, on every granite block that presented a smooth surface, inscriptions, the far greater part of which were illegible. I copied the three following. The characters of the first are *a foot long*." — *Syria*, p. 607. The *signare litteris cubitum longis* of Plautus (Rud. 45. 2. 7.) shows the scale to have been one in common use with the ancients.

for the intervals between the lines, and again, for the probable distance between the lowest line and the ground, it will result that this monument must rise to a height of from 60 to 80, or even 100 feet. On the cliff on the opposite side of the pass, we are informed, stands another inscription, on a corresponding scale, in sixty-seven lines. The altitude of this may be proportionately greater.

If these proportions be even approximately correct, and they rest on high authority, is it within possibility that either monument could be the work of pilgrims to Sinai, during their mid-day halt? Mr. Gray's remarks upon some of the inscriptions copied by him in the Wady Mokatteb, go, in different degrees, but with equal conclusiveness, to demonstrate the same impossibility. In the faces of perpendicular rocks, to travellers without appliances, 20 feet, or 12 feet, or 100 feet, are alike inaccessible. With this in mind, we will proceed to the descriptions and measurements of Gray.

"No. 60. Rock high up (12 feet)." "62. Same place." "65. Fragment *high up*." "66. Rock *high up*." "75. Rock *high up*." "77. Fragment *high up*." "90. Rock *high up*." "11. Rock *high up in a remote place*,—cross letter *hardly accessible*." "17. Fallen rock, *inaccessible at*

present." "29. Rock *high up.*" "56. Rock *high up.*" "61. Rock *high up* (*about twenty feet*, in a place where the winter torrent has undermined the slope)." "72. Loose stone *high up.*" "78. Fragment *high up.*" "79. *High up.*" The degrees of altitude thus marked, are various, or undetermined. But whether the height be 12 feet (as in No. 60), or 20 feet (as in No. 61), or anything between or beyond these elevations, one thing is clear, namely, that their execution by chance travellers, or unprepared pilgrims, is a thing impossible.*⁶

Mr. Gray's statements of the elevations of many of the inscriptions in the Wady Mokatteb is paralleled by the independent testimony of Burckhardt, relative to the original positions of fallen inscriptions discovered by him, at the foot of the rock of Naszeb, or Warsan, near Suez, on

* The absurdity of this theory has been exposed, with the sound sense and dry humour of an antiquary, by Mr. Gough: "Those who reflect on the fatigue of caravan-travelling in these parched countries, so feelingly detailed in Mr. Irwin's late journey over-land from Suez to Cairo, may, perhaps, think it very extraordinary, that pilgrims should consume the little leisure such journeys afford, in attaching themselves to a rock (even the shady side), at the height of 12 or 14 feet, to carve letters, which, while they are described to approach nearest to the Hebrew of any known character, are intended to be represented as having no more meaning than the scrawls of children with chalk on a wall." *This note is Mr. Gough's.* — Nichols, *Lit. Anecd.*, vol. ii. p. 244. For the penance of a day's copying in the Wady Mokatteb, see final note 6. If such be the experience of the copyist, what must have been that of the engravers?

the same route. "While my guides and servants lay asleep under the rock, and one of the Arabs had gone to the well, to water the camels, and fill the skins, I walked round the rock; and was surprised to find inscriptions similar in form to those which have been copied by travellers in Wady Mokatteb. They are upon the surface of blocks *which have fallen down from the cliff*; and some of them appear to have been engraved *while the pieces still formed a part of the main rock*." *

While the whole facts of the case, as thus far exhibited, demonstrate the utter untenableness of Professor Beer's hypothesis as to the origin and authorship of the Sinaïtic inscriptions, there remains in reserve one consideration more: a consideration alone sufficing to prove, to the satisfaction of every capable and unbiassed understanding, that there was but one period, and one people, in the history of the world, to which, and to whom, those mysterious monuments can be rationally ascribed. The consideration in question is this: *the physical character of the peninsula of Sinai*.

This "waste and howling wilderness," as it is expressively designated in the Old Testament, is described, by all who have visited it in modern

* Syria, p. 477.

times, as (in most parts) utterly destitute of sustenance *for man*.^{*} For flocks and herds, indeed, in the rainy seasons, its vallies, usually parched and withered (an oasis here and there like Wady Feiran excepted), yield a sudden, abundant, and short-lived vegetation. But, with the exception of a few scattered date-groves, of food for the use of man its produce is as nothing. Even the wandering Bedouin, who seeks pasture for his camels or his sheep, during the rains, amidst these wilds, must carry with him, we learn, his own simple and scanty meals. But what Sinai is in

* "No reflection forced itself upon me so often, or so urgently, in passing over the track of the Israelites, as the utter and universal inaptitude of this country for the sustenance of animal life. It seems really to possess no elements favourable to human existence besides a pure atmosphere; and no appearances favour the supposition that it was ever essentially better. I am filled with wonder that so many travellers should task their ingenuity to get clear of the miracles, which, according to the narrative of Moses, were wrought to facilitate the journey of that vast, unwieldy host; when it is demonstrable *that they could not have subsisted three days in this desert* without supernatural resources. The extensive region, through which we were twelve days in passing on dromedaries, is, and ever must have been, incapable of affording food sufficient to support even a thousand, or a few hundred people, for a month in the year. There is no corn-land or pasturage; no game nor roots; hardly any birds or insects; and the scanty supply of water is loathsome to the taste, provoking, rather than appeasing, thirst. What could the two millions of Israel have eaten, without the miracles of the manna and the quails? How could they have escaped destruction by drought, but for the healing of the waters of Marah? A miracle that was probably repeated in Wady Gerundel, and at the other salt wells on their route to Sinai." — *Dr. Olin's Travels in Egypt, Arabia Petrea, and the Holy Land*, vol. i. p. 381.

our days, it has been through all preceding ages. From the Deluge, if not from the beginning, it has been, is, and must remain to the end of time, the same "waste and howling wilderness." However periodically traversed, it never could have been permanently occupied by mankind. This decisive consideration brings us back once more to the phenomenon of its multitudinous and mysterious inscriptions. To execute these monuments, it has been already seen, ladders and platforms, or ropes and baskets, the appliances of a fixed and settled population, were indispensable. But no people ever could have been fixed and settled there, unless provided with daily supplies of food and water in some extraordinary way. Now the only people in the history of the world answering to this description, was God's People Israel, after their Exode out of Egypt: a fact which tells with a force of which he never dreamt upon the independent admission of Beer, that the Sinaitic inscriptions bear upon their face self-evident marks of their having been *the work of a single generation.* ✕

To Israel in the wilderness, it follows, and to her alone, every antecedent consideration connected with those monuments conducts, or rather compels the mind: their numbers, their diffusion, their localities, their elevations, their internal

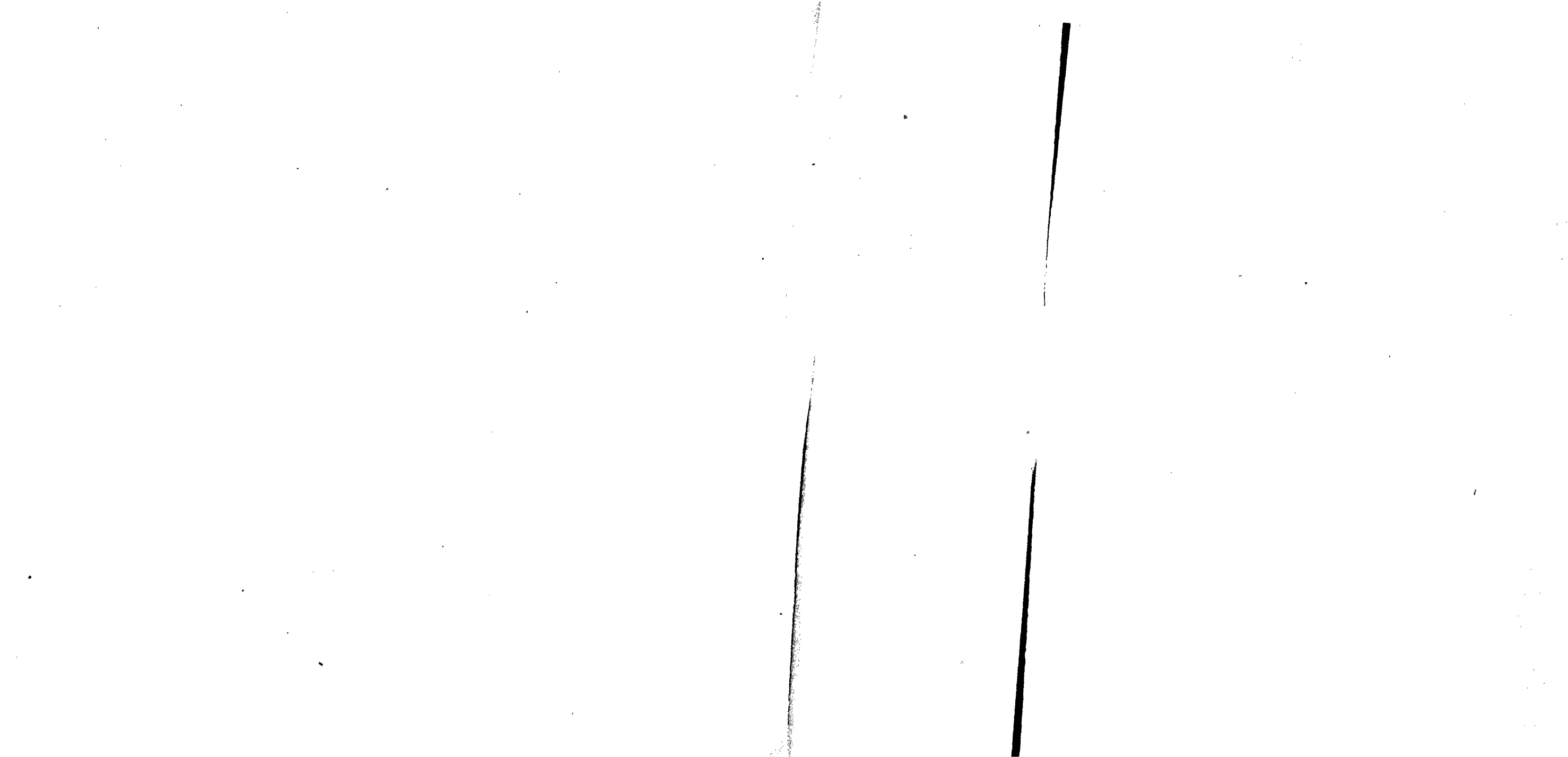
tokens of being the workmanship of one and the same people, within the space of forty years ; and over and above all this, their existence in an uninhabited and uninhabitable wilderness, leave no alternative between this one sound conclusion, and a host of puerilities like those presented in the “ *Studia Asiatica* ” of the late Professor Beer.

The next stage of investigation brings us to the inscriptions themselves ; and to the inquiry whether and how far the antecedent considerations are sustained by evidences apparent on the face of the characters. To this branch of the inquiry I would now invite attention.

If the Sinaïtic inscriptions be indeed, what Cosmas and his Jewish fellow-travellers believed them to be, the autograph records of Israel in the wilderness, it is only reasonable to presuppose that the characters employed in them would bear a close affinity to the written language of Egypt. As Divine Providence never needlessly employs extraordinary, to the neglect of ordinary means, we are justified in assuming, where there exists neither proof nor presumption to the contrary, that the Israelites in the wilderness used the characters and language which they had acquired in Egypt, during a sojourn of two hundred and fifteen years. They may not, it is true, have written : but if they did write (as

from Deut. xxvii. 1—8. we learn they certainly did at a later period of the Exode*), we might expect to find in any monuments of theirs the written characters of Egypt. Of the soundness of this expectation, a single but decisive proof has been already given from Mr. Gray, who, on the occurrence in No. 11. of his Sinaïtic inscriptions of the character ⲡ , has this remark, “It is to be observed that there is an *Egyptian hieroglyphic of precisely this form.*” The cha-

* The command given here by Moses to the Israelites, to *write* all the words of the Law upon great stones, cased over with fresh plaster (clearly to facilitate the execution of the writing in small characters), on their first crossing the Jordan, demonstrates the important fact that *the art of writing* was familiar to Israel in the wilderness. This fact, again, supplies a strong presumption that their knowledge of the art had not lain dormant during their forty years’ sojourn in the peninsula of Sinai. The existence of thousands of inscriptions upon the rocks and mountains, and in the vallies of Sinai (all in the enchorial characters of Egypt), meets this presumption. And from the coincidence of the probabilities with the facts of the case, arises evidence of a very valuable kind in support of the Israelitish origin of the writings. Upon the face of the case it is clear, that nothing but practice in the art of writing could, in the natural order of things, have enabled the Israelites, on entering Canaan, to cover the stone pillars with their whole written Law, as the expression “all the words of this Law” seems plainly to imply. Nothing miraculous, be it observed, is indicated in the transaction. They knew how to write; and were simply enjoined to apply the art to record, on a material soft at first, but afterwards hard as the stone on which it was plastered, the Law given them by Moses. Is it not probable that the Mosaic Law, as a whole, was transcribed on these “great stones”? the soft plaster admitting, at once, of close writing, and small characters, large blocks of stone (their number is unspecified) might contain, had it been the Divine will, not the Law only, but the five Books of Moses.



Sinai Alphabet.

Plavetta enchorial Alphabe.

Masara enchorial Alphabet.

Sinai Alphabet.

a	o p p	o q b	B B 4 4	ı ı
b	o p p	o p p	B B 4 4	B B 4 4
c	t t f n	t t f		
d	u u	u	u	u
e	u u < u	ı 3 o	u	u u u
f	>	ı 3 o	u	u u u
g	x x x x	ı 3 o	u	u u u
h	ı ı	ı 3 o	u	u u u
i	p q	p	u	u u u
j	u u u	u u u	u	u u u
k	u u u	u u u	u	u u u
l	u u u	u u u	u	u u u
m	u u u	u u u	u	u u u
n	u u u	u u u	u	u u u
o	u u u	u u u	u	u u u
p	u u u	u u u	u	u u u
q	u u u	u u u	u	u u u
r	u u u	u u u	u	u u u
s	u u u	u u u	u	u u u
t	u u u	u u u	u	u u u
u	u u u	u u u	u	u u u
v	u u u	u u u	u	u u u
w	u u u	u u u	u	u u u
x	u u u	u u u	u	u u u
y	u u u	u u u	u	u u u
z	u u u	u u u	u	u u u

racter, it should be observed, is not only Egyptian, but it is *the sacred tau*, the most prominent of all the Egyptian hieroglyphics. From this identification with Egypt of a single character, the present writer has advanced the proof to the identification of the Sinaïtic alphabet with the enchorial alphabet of the Rosetta stone⁷; and with the characters, also, found in the quarries of Masara, of a date prior to the age of Moses. The case is matter-of-fact. And a harmony of the two alphabets, executed, not⁸ by transcript, but (to secure perfect accuracy) by tracing, is placed before the reader in Plate I.

The general identity of the two alphabets is apparent at first view. But I would direct special attention to three characters: the old Syriac *h*, **Ⲁ**^{*}, the Hebrew *ain*, **א**, and the Ethiopic *koph*, **ⲕ**. Of each of these characters, from both alphabets, there are here two or three different forms; and forms so peculiar, in the *koph* especially, as to preclude all probability of accidental coincidence. So perfect, in truth, is the identity, that it is only the difference of place and time that excludes the idea of the characters being formed by the same hand. The

* As written in a MS. of the fourth Century, now in the British Museum. I had treated it successfully as *h* for several years, before I found it authorized by this MS. of about A.D. 100.

forms of the *ain*, I may add, fully justify Beer's tribute to the freedom, boldness, and calligraphic beauty of the Sinaitic characters.

The double *ss*, *נש*, is another point of correspondence, less obvious, but equally conclusive. Having stated and exhibited the identity of the alphabets, I leave it with reflecting readers to draw their own conclusions from this point of the evidences, as to the true origin and authorship of the Sinaitic inscriptions.

Before thus bringing it to the test of a common alphabet, the question had been argued wholly upon the ground of antecedent considerations. It has been shown that the whole antecedent considerations concur with the idea of an Israelitish origin, and are irreconcilable with any other. We will now proceed to further evidences of this origin furnished by the inscriptions themselves. The best and simplest way of introducing these evidences to the reader, will be, as in the case of the Hisn Ghorâb inscription, to lay before him the steps by which the results hereafter to be submitted were gradually arrived at.

It was in the summer of 1844, immediately after the publication, in a former work*, of an Appendix on the subject of the Hamyaritic inscriptions, that the kindred subject of the Sinaitic

* The Historical Geography of Arabia.

inscriptions was brought under my consideration, incidentally, by a friend who had visited Sinai, and who placed in my hands Mr. Gray's collection of the inscriptions, to be met with only in the Transactions of the Royal Society of Literature. At a first glance I was struck by the clear identity of several of the characters with characters of the old Hamyaritic alphabet recovered at Hisn Ghorâb; and whose powers were already ascertained by the decyphering of the Hisn Ghorâb inscription. From the discovery, at Sinai also, of these newly recovered letters, I was presently led on to notice among the Sinaïtic characters, other characters of previously known forms and powers: some Hebrew, some Greek, and some Arabic.

A little reflection upon these phenomena soon suggested to my mind, as the only sound and safe rule of experimental decyphering, the following simple canon: That, in comparing an unknown with known alphabets, *letters of the same known forms be assumed to possess the same known powers*. For however, in Greece and the idioms of the West, this rule might prove uncertain, there was, in the nature of the case, a moral assurance of its certainty and safety, in the opposite quarter, arising from the unchanging character of all things in the East. The Sinaïtic

𐤁 and 𐤂, accordingly, I treated as the Hebrew 𐤁 (*b*); the 𐤇 and 𐤈, as the 𐤇 (*d*); the 𐤌 and 𐤍, as 𐤍 (*ain*); the 𐤎 and 𐤏, as 𐤎 and 𐤏 (*kaf*); the 𐤐*, as 𐤐 (*m*); the 𐤑, as 𐤑 (*n*); the 𐤒, as the Greek 𐤒 (*n*); the 𐤓, as the Greek 𐤓 (*r*) †; the 𐤔, as the Arabic 𐤔 (*f*); the 𐤕, as the Arabic 𐤕; the 𐤖, as the Ethiopic 𐤖 (*z*); the 𐤗, as the Ethiopic 𐤗 (*t*); the 𐤘, as the Ethiopic 𐤘 (*koph*); the 𐤙 and 𐤚, as the old Syriac 𐤙 (*h*); and the 𐤛, as the Arabic 𐤛 (*h*), &c. ‡

From the adoption of this rule as a first principle of decyphering, I proceeded at once to test the alphabet derived from it, by its experimental application to the Sinaitic inscriptions. My first essay was made upon Mr. Gray's inscription, No. 59.: a record in five lines, with

* Another form of the *m*, of constant occurrence at Sinai, viz. 𐤐, I since learn is a form of the *m* in some Hebrew MSS. It is, in fact, the Arabic initial *m*, viz. 𐤐, only this letter has its upper limb bent down to connect it with the adjoining letter in that cursive character.

† The Greek alphabet, formed on the old Cadmeian, being of Phœnician origin, its characters (excepting the few whose powers have been changed) are as available at Sinai as the Hebrew or Arabic.

‡ I may here remark once for all, as a defect fatal to the alphabet of Professor Beer, that he has absolutely omitted altogether several of the principal characters at Sinai. For example, the 𐤙 𐤚, and 𐤛, the 𐤖, the 𐤗, the 𐤘, the 𐤙, with other prominent characters of these inscriptions, nowhere appear in his alphabet. To attempt translation with such defective machinery, must, in the nature of things, tangle, instead of weaving the web. The omitted characters, moreover, are mostly characters of known alphabets, and known powers.

two slight outlines (apparently of water) one above the fourth, the other below the fifth, line. It is equally impossible to express or forget the sensation experienced, when my newly constructed alphabet, formed on the principle just described, returned the translation given in the next page.

SINAI INSCRIPTIONS.

No. I.

GRAY, 59.

16197512 קרע עליו
 7 9797 עליו
 6 5 6 9
 97972
 9 5 7 4

A Quadruped opposite the last line but one

עמ קרע עדר אמה
 עמ עדרן
 רמח
 נזר נר
 עין מר רפ

The People with prone mouth drinketh [at] the water-springs

The People [at] the two water-springs

kicketh [like] an ass

smiting with the branch of a tree

the well of bitterness he heals.

* שמון ישרון

ויבעט. — Deut. xxxii. 15.

* The original word קרע, קרע, *karû*, Prono ore bibet, “drinking with prone mouth,” is of frequent occurrence in the Sinaïtic inscriptions; so frequent, as to mark the greediness which it expresses *as*

עם

עם, Populus. "The People." עם, *âm*, Plebs. "The common People."

כדע

כדע, *Flexit se, incurvavit se genu.* "Apud Arabes significationis primigenia vestigia tantum supersunt: *ut*, prono ore bibit, *pro* incurvavit se ad bibendum." — *Gesenius*.
"To bow, sink down, as a man upon his knees."כרע, *karad*, Os admovit *vel* immisit *aquæ*; eamque sorpsit seu potavit, non hauriens manu *aut* vase.

"Drinking with the mouth, without using a vessel or hands."

עד

עד, *âdar*, Aquâ abundavit locus. (A water-spring.)
A place abounding with water.

אמ

אמ, *ama*, Equidem, profecto, quidem. Truly, verily, indeed.

עם

עם, Populus. "The People." עם, *âm*, Plebs. "The common People."

עד

עד, *âdaran*, Two places abounding with water.

רמ

רמ, *ramaha*, Calcitravit *asinus*. Kicketh the ass.

הזר

הזר, *hazara*, Percussit fuste. Smiting with a stick (or staff).

נר

נר, P., "The main branch of a tree."

עין

עין, *ain*, Fons, scaturigo, et vivæ aquæ fluxus.
A fountain, spring, flux of living water.

מר

מר, *murrah*, Amara res. Bitter. A bitter thing. Marah.

רפ

רפ, *raf*, Curans. "Curing, healing, remedying." The Hebrew רפ, *Sanavit*, similar in sense, has special reference to the cure here wrought, — *the healing of bitter waters*. "Aqua (amara et noxia) *sanari* dicitur ubi salubris reditur, 2 Reg. ii. 22." — *Gesenius* in voc.

a national characteristic. That this habit was a national characteristic of the early Israelites, is demonstrated by a passage of their history in the Book of Judges (vii. 3—8.). This context throws a striking light upon the propensity of their ancestors; and, in so doing, bears historical testi-

At the foot of the inscription Mr. Gray has the following note: "A quadruped opposite the last line but one." Perfectly satisfied that the "quadruped" here noticed, as standing under the word *ramah**, *Calcitravit asinus*, "kicketh the ass," would prove, whenever copied from the original, to be the figure of an ass, a feeling of disappointment not unnaturally arose at Mr. Gray's omission to make a copy of the animal: the more, as these rude Sinai figures of animals are so easily drawn.

mony to the correctness of the above decyphering. Its value as evidence, from its exhibition of the same people, after the lapse of centuries, nationally addicted to the same peculiar excess, were the passage less familiar, might demand its introduction in full. But the part immediately in point will suffice: "So he brought down the people unto the water. And the Lord said unto Gideon, Every one that lappeth with his tongue as a dog lappeth, him shalt thou set by himself; likewise *every one that boweth down upon his knees to drink*. And the number of them that lapped their hands to their mouth, were three hundred men: *but all the rest of the people bowed down upon their knees to drink water*." It is only while transcribing this note for the press, that I observe, in the Hebrew text of Judges vii. 6, the ipsissima verba of the Marah inscription, as read and rendered by me from the Arabic nearly seven years ago: viz. עָם בָּרַעַן, "The people bowed down," &c. The definition of the Hebrew root בָּרַעַן, in Gesenius and Parkhurst, proves, here at least, the identity of the Arabic with the Hebrew, and the identity of both with the language of the Sinaitic inscriptions. For further remarks see final note 8.

* 6 5 6 9, رَمَاهُ, *ramaham*, with a servile final *m*: so "نَسَمَ, cum م servili." Golius in voc. — The word *ramah*, Beer reads וְאֵלּוּ, *Walū* (a proper name): a reading set aside by the figure of the wild ass, standing beneath or beside the word, in all the four inscriptions. This one word, not one letter of which is to be found in Prof. Beer's reading, thus proves his alphabet to be erroneous in three of its characters.

I had now before me, to my own conviction at least, an apparently contemporary record of the second miracle of the Exode; the murmuring of the Israelites at Marah, and the healing of the bitter waters: while the mention, in the second line of the inscription, of "two water-springs" (عدران*, *âdaran*, literally *two places abounding with water*), corroborated by the two outlines, apparently included the fresh murmuring, or the opening of the rock of Meribah, which immediately succeeded.

On communicating at the time this inscription, with my translation of it, to friends with whom I was in the habit of conferring on subjects of criticism, I expressed my regret at Mr. Gray's omission of the "quadruped," and particularly requested them to remember what I then stated: namely, that whenever a perfect copy of the inscription was taken, "the figure of a quadruped" noticed by Gray would be found to be the figure of an ass. It was more to my satis-

* V979. From this group, P. Beer obtains, as usual, a proper name, נון, by the process of omitting the final Greek ν, *nun*, and of changing the power of the Greek ρ, *rho*, into ν, *vau*:—a process which might make anything of anything. In the other characters we are agreed; and the reading عدران, *âdaran*, is obtained, simply by allowing to the Greek letters, ρ and ν, their known powers. The reading, we have seen, is confirmed by the two water-springs.

faction than surprise that, within the next day or two, the prediction was verified. An oriental scholar courteously offered for my perusal Professor Beer's "Century of Sinaïtic Inscriptions," a collection which not only I had not seen, but of the existence of which I was unaware; and there, on opening the book, I found a duplicate inscription, and in it Mr. Gray's "quadruped," the figure of the ass.

It was due to the cause of truth and knowledge in their most sacred relations, immediately to communicate this wholly unexpected verification of my decyphrement to the friends, to whom it had previously been submitted.* I did so at once, in order that "in the mouth of two or three witnesses every word might be established."

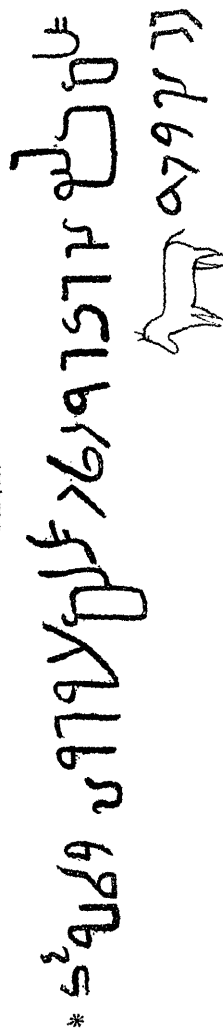
The proof of the correct reading and rendering of the word *ramah*, and of the true powers, consequently, of the three characters which compose it, was now placed above criticism. The correctness of the readings and renderings preceding it, viz. *âm karâ*, *âdar*, and *âda-*

* It was to the late Archbishop of Canterbury, and a mutual friend present at the conversation, that I made the request mentioned in a former page. I now sent His Grace a tracing of the animal. In the last conversation I had with Abp. Howley, His Grace observed that he perfectly recollected the stages of the discovery, and the request that had been made to him.

WATERS OF MARAH.

No. II.

BERR, 33.

* 

נער סר
עם כרע
עדר אס
עם עדר
רמח

The People with prone mouth drinketh [at] the water-springs together. The People [at] the two water-springs kicketh like a hornet-stung ass remittently.

* "Jeshurun waxed fat and kicked."—Deut. xxxii. 15.

*ran**, sanctioned by the clear Greek and Hebrew forms of the characters, was corroborated by the water-line representations of two wells or fountains, at least of outlines which might very well represent them. The name of the locality, *Marah*, the second word in the last line, was the only important word left requiring similar confirmation. It received this confirmation in a way beyond hope, from the identity of form between the lower of the two wells in the inscription, and the bitter well of *Howara*, situated about fifty miles from Ayoun Musa and Suez; a spring which all authorities agree with Burckhardt in acknowledging as the true *Marah* of Exodus.⁹ The circumstance to which the discovery of this correspondence is owing is too remarkable to be suppressed. Shortly after the decyphering of the inscription, I was favoured by a visit from a Fellow and Tutor of Cambridge, then recently returned from the East. This gentleman had passed four years in Palestine and Arabia Petræa, formerly so difficult of access, but which he

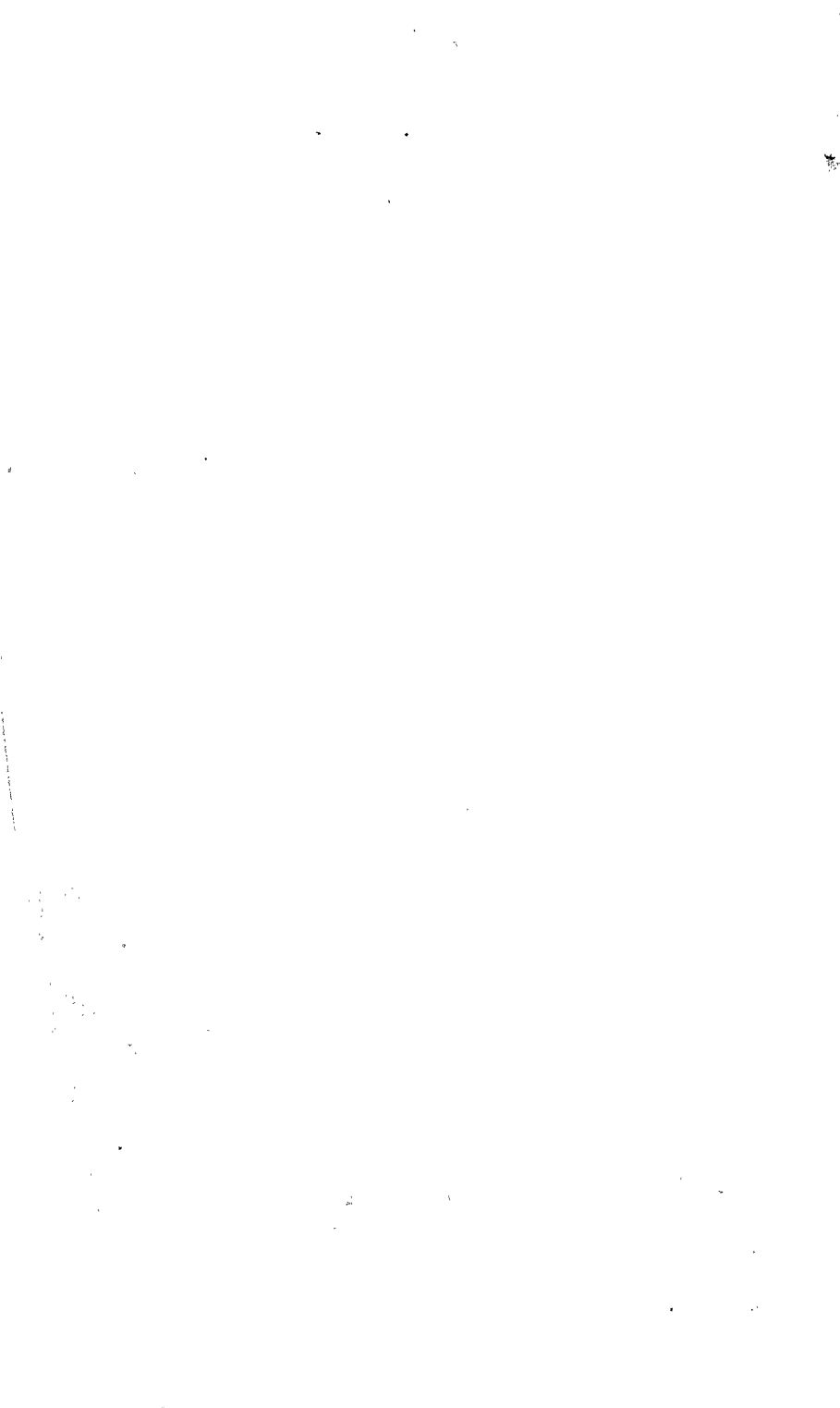
* While correcting for the Press, I discover that Beer has given their true powers to the first radicals of this word, viz. ער or אע, *ad.* And only for his confining himself to Hebrew as the key, and his unaccountable metamorphosis of the Greek Ϙ, *r*, into Ϙ, *vau*, and of the Greek ν, *n*, into בר, *bar* a common-place which he finds in all the Sinai inscriptions, he might have had the true reading. How he obtains his בר, for there is nothing to stand for it in Gray, might be inexplicable, were it not for his ingenious device of manufacturing one text out of three separate inscriptions. See *Beer*, pp. 738., Nos. 31, 32, 33.

examined at leisure, by domesticating himself in the encampments of the Bedouins. Our common interest in the subject led to conversation upon the Sinaïtic inscriptions, which he had looked at only with the eye of a passing traveller. On my pointing out in Mr. Gray's collection, in answer to his inquiries, the inscription which records the miracle at Marah, with its two sketches of water-springs confirmative of the decyphrement, my new acquaintance immediately observed, "Of the first of these wells I can say nothing, for I did not see it: but here (pointing to the second) is the well of Marah by which I sat. It is exactly of this shape, about five feet in diameter, and a stream running from it in the direction here delineated." *¹⁰ My informant further added, that, when he was about to taste the water, his Bedouins exclaimed *Murrah*, *murrah* (*bitter*, *bitter*), thus pronouncing undesignedly its Scriptural name. That this exclamation is their usual warning here, appears from its being men-

* "The small oval pool occupies the centre of a mound of travertine." — *Forty Days in the Desert*, p. 31. Mr. Bartlett's sketch of the Ain Howara perfectly agrees with that in the inscription, an oval pool, with a stream issuing from one side. Viewed from the same point of the road, or the west, with the stream running to the left, even the dip in the outline below, and the lesser curve above, correspond very exactly in the two delineations. The form of the well of Marah has thus apparently remained unchanged by the revolutions of three thousand three hundred years. The stream from it is quickly absorbed in the sands; and this feature, also, is marked in the Sinaïtic outline: the stream terminates.

tioned by other travellers.¹¹ If one might venture to judge of its effect upon readers generally, from the impression made by this eye-witness evidence upon those present at the conversation, the result would be satisfactory indeed. As it is now in my power, however, to present the correspondence to the eye, I subjoin the outline of the well of Howara, as viewed from the road to Sinai, the reverse of the view represented in the inscription. How interesting the circumstance, that a name and locality of the Exode, determined independently by other considerations, should be thus fixed by the fidelity of a rude outline three thousand three hundred years ago!

I subsequently recognized in No. 31. of Beer's "Century," what, but for his perspicacity as a palæographer, the rudeness of the characters in this example might have concealed, a third occurrence of the same inscription, also accompanied by the figure of the ass. "A threefold cord (Solomon tells us) is not quickly broken," but the triple evidence thus successively arrived at was yet to be fortified by another strand. For a fourth recurrence of the inscription, with the figure of the wild ass standing, as in Mr. Gray's example, under the word *ramah*, was brought to light by my late friend, the Rev. Thomas Brockman, who visited the Wady Mokatteb in May,



1845, for the purpose of aiding the progress of discovery, with my copies and decypherments of the examples of this inscription already in our possession in his hands.* This fourth example is in every light important; but in none more so than in the confutation which it furnishes of Professor Beer's notion, that the three examples of the inscription alone known to him, though essentially differing in parts, might yet be, not separate records, but copies of one and the same monument. In Mr. Brockman's case this was impossible, for, when he made his fac-simile, he had the materials for comparison in his hands; and his hand as a draughtsman was as true as his heart:

"Such a faithful chronicler was Griffith."

The body of the inscription, it follows, was a common-place: the record of the first rebellion, and first miracle, after the Exode, repeated, we may suppose, by Israelites of the class of Bezaleel and

* I take this opportunity of mentioning that Mr. Brockman's papers have been entrusted to my care, with a view to publication. Their appearance has been delayed, partly, by the hope of recovering an important portion, consisting of his earlier journals, drawings, and copies of Sinaitic inscriptions, which unfortunately has disappeared in the transit of my friend's personal effects viâ Bombay. His letters, however, and journal of five months' residence on the coast of Hadramaut, including his discovery and sketch of the mouth of the Cave Canim river, (which escaped the notice even of the Hon. East India Company's surveyors), with visits to ruins of high interest and antiquity on the southern coast, contain materials calculated to inform, and, it is hoped, to interest the public.

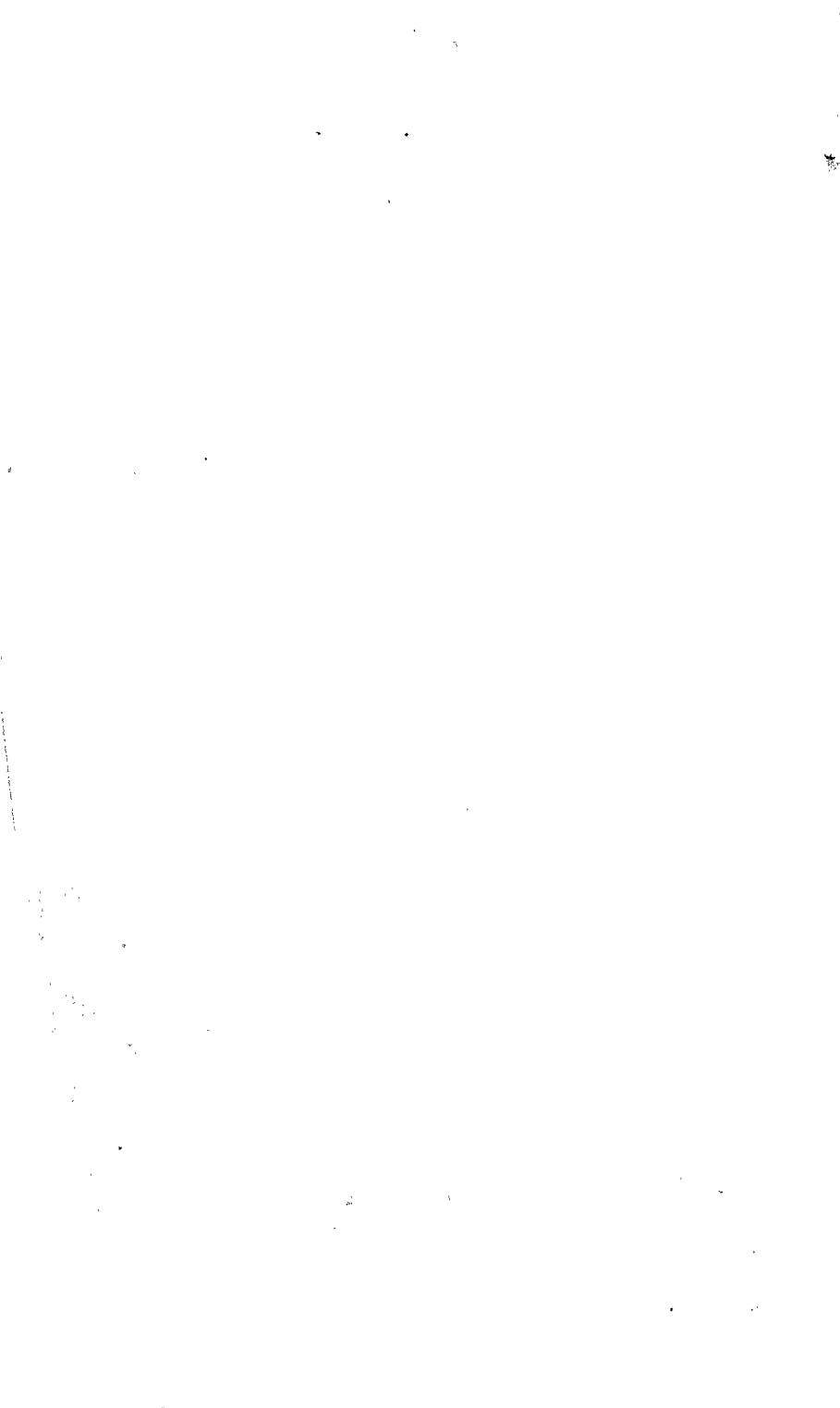
Aholiab, upon different rocks. In confirmation of this view it may be worthy of remark, that the words *âm ramah*, "The People kicked like an ass," were found by Burckhardt at the foot of Mount Serbal, "upon a large rock beyond the spring, and towards Wady Feiran."*

In justice to a common-place of so high interest, both from its place in the history of the Exode, and as the first step towards real decyphermment at Sinai, a Plate with fac-similes of the four inscriptions is annexed, illustrated by a drawing from nature of the wild ass.†

The pictorial inscriptions at Sinai, which thus represent rebellious Israel under the image of a restive ass, derive light and corroboration of the

* Syria, p. 614.

† Let the results arrived at in this one instance be tested by the doctrine of chances, and it will appear highly probable that the true alphabet alone could produce them. By Sir William Jones's computation, there are about 10,000 roots in the Arabic language. Assuming the language of the Sinaitic rocks to contain the same number of roots, there would be 9,999 chances to 1 against lighting upon the true meaning of any given word, by the mere force of unaided conjecture. My decyphermment, however, of the alphabet, by wholly independent means, has enabled me, without the help of an illustration, to give to a sentence, common to four inscriptions, and consisting of 6 words, an interpretation the correctness of which is now corroborated, as to one leading word, at least, in that sentence, by the juxta-position of a pictorial representation. Conceding, for the sake of argument, that the picture might be applicable equally to any one of the 7 words, still, even thus, the chances against being right become limited to 6 only, instead of 9,999, to 1. In other words, my decyphermment of the alphabet has conducted me about 1,666 times nearer the truth, than conjecture would have done: an approximation sufficient, surely, to satisfy the most incredulous.



most striking character from the Old Testament. The imagery of the Old Testament repeatedly identifies Israel with this animal; and, in so doing, it identifies, by congruity, with Israel in the wilderness, the notices and images of the wild ass upon the rocks of Sinai. The words of the Song of Moses, "Jeshurun waxed fat and kicked," following upon the description, "He found him in a desert land, and in the waste howling wilderness," if not in designed allusion, agree, at least, very remarkably with these delineations. Jeshurun must symbolize an animal of the horse species. That the ass, or wild ass, was the animal intended, further appears from the imagery of the prophets. Thus Isaiah says of Israel, "The ox knoweth his owner, and the ass his master's crib, but Israel doth not know, my people doth not consider."* That the Song of Moses was here in the prophet's mind, appears from a later chapter: "Fear not, O Jacob, my servant; and thou Jeshurun, whom I have chosen."† Jeremiah is still more specific. This prophet directly symbolizes Israel in the wilderness under the image of a wild ass: "Where is the Lord, that brought us up out of the Land of Egypt, that led us through the wilderness; through a land of deserts and pits; through a

* Is. i. 3.

† xlv. 2.

land of drought, and of the shadow of death; through a land that no man passed through, and where no man dwelt? Thou art a swift dromedary traversing her ways, *a wild ass used to the wilderness.*"* But the prophet Hosea brings the image still more home: "Israel is swallowed up; now shall they be among the Gentiles as a vessel wherein is no pleasure. For they are gone up to Assyria *a wild ass alone by himself.*"†

It is impossible, therefore, for any image more appropriately to represent rebellious Israel in the wilderness, or under which she was more likely to be depicted by faithful Israelites of the Exode, than that which so frequently occurs upon the rocks of Sinai, the image of the wild ass.

But the prophet Hosea, we observe, also compares disobedient Israel to "a swift dromedary traversing her ways." And this prophetic emblem, too, is repeatedly found sculptured at Sinai. Two of the most remarkable examples will be given as we proceed.

The demonstrable decyphrement of this one Sinaitic common-place, the first example of which comprized a record of two of the earliest and greatest events of the Exode, the rebellions and

* Jer. ii. 23, 24. This double image is reflected at Sinai, by the figure of Jehovah, or of the Angel of the Covenant, leading both animals.

† Hos. viii. 9.

miracles of Marah and Meribah, would have rendered slackness or delay inexcusable. Step by step, accordingly, the task of investigation was pursued, until several similar results had been arrived at; and until all the Sinaïtic inscriptions as yet in our possession, all, at least, contained in the collections of Gray, Beer, and Burckhardt, had been carefully examined. The result was uniform. All that were in unconfused characters, and hence more clearly decypherable, approved themselves, like the Marah inscriptions, contemporary records of Israel in the wilderness.

Among the events of the Exode these records comprize, besides the healing of the waters of Marah, the passage of the Red Sea, with the introduction of Pharaoh twice by name, and two notices of the Egyptian tyrant's vain attempt to save himself, *by flight on horseback* *, from the returning waters; together with hieroglyphic representations of himself, and *of his horse*, in accordance with a hitherto unexplained passage of the Song of Moses: "For *the horse of Pharaoh* went in, with his chariots and with his horsemen into the sea, and the Lord brought again the waters of the sea upon them:" † they comprize, further, the miraculous supplies of manna and

* Ps. xxxiii. 16.

† Exod. xv. 19.

of flesh: the battle of Rephidim, with the mention of Moses by his office, and of Aaron and Hur by their names; the same inscription repeated, describing the holding up of Moses's hands by Aaron and Hur, and their supporting him with a stone, illustrated by a drawing, apparently, of the stone, containing within it the inscription, and the figure of Moses over it with uplifted hands: and, lastly, the plague of fiery serpents, with the representation of a serpent in the act of coming down, as it were from heaven, upon a prostrate Israelite.

These references to recorded events of the Exode, compose, however, but a small part of the Sinaitic inscriptions as yet in our possession; the great mass of which consist of descriptions of rebellious Israel, under the figures of kicking asses, restive camels, rampant goats, sluggish tortoises, and lizards of the desert.

However to be accounted for, one peculiarity (the more remarkable because so little to be anticipated) characterizes the whole of these monuments already in our hands: namely, that not a single text of the Old Testament, not a single passage from the Books of Moses, is to be met with among them. This result is so contrary to every natural anticipation, that it is, in itself, no slight guarantee of the fidelity of

the decypherments. For any *arbitrary* decypherment of Israelitish monuments would be certain to abound with quotations from the Pentateuch, or with passages to be found in it.

The most probable explanation of this total absence of Scriptural references and quotations, is to be sought and found in the contemporary character of the chronology of the Sinaitic inscriptions: monuments which bear in their brevity and rudeness obvious marks of their being so many chronicles of the day; some of which may have been written before the Pentateuch itself; and all, most probably, before that sacred volume had been familiarized by use to the wandering Israelites.

These reflections naturally lead us on to consideration of the circumstances which may be conceived to have given birth to those mysterious monuments. That writing, or engraving, on stone, was an art known to Israel in the wilderness, is certain from what we read in Exodus of the fabrication of "the breast-plate of judgment." *

"And thou shalt set it in settings of stone, even four rows of stones. And the stones shall be *with the names of the children of Israel*, twelve according to their names, like *the engravings of a*

* Exod. xxviii. 15—21.

signet; every one with his name shall they be, according to the twelve tribes."

That the art was not confined to a few, but imparted to many, is further certain, from what we read of Bezaleel and Aholiab; who were inspired by Jehovah with wisdom or skill for the works of the Sanctuary, and whose office it was to instruct other workmen to work with and under them: "And the Lord spake unto Moses, saying, See, I have called by name Bezaleel the son of Uri, the son of Hur, of the tribe of Judah. And I, behold I have given with him Aholiab, the son of Abisamach, of the tribe of Dan. And in the hearts of all the wise-hearted I have put wisdom, that they may make all that I have commanded them. Then wrought Bezaleel and Aholiab, and every wise-hearted man, in whom the Lord put wisdom and understanding to know how to work all manner of work for the service of the Sanctuary, according to all that the Lord had commanded. And Moses called Bezaleel and Aholiab, and every wise-hearted man in whose heart the Lord had put wisdom, even every one whose heart had stirred him up to come unto the work to do it."* Now as writing or engraving characters on stones was part of this work, it is clear that numbers of

* Exod. xxxi., xxxv., xxxvi.: see and compare *passim*.

workmen were to be found in the camp of Israel who were familiar with this art; from whom still greater numbers, if not previously conversant in Egypt with the art of writing on stone, would acquire rude ideas of it. But by Israelites like these, what would be more naturally recorded daily upon the rocks amidst which they wandered, than the wonderful events of which they were eye-witnesses from day to day? And being good men, as the inspired pupils of Bezaleel and Aholiab unquestionably were, and as is attested to the conviction of the present writer by the fact, that not a single ungodly record is to be met with in the whole of the inscriptions we possess, what more naturally would be their constant themes, than, on the one hand, the daily mercies of Jehovah, and, on the other hand, the daily ingratitude and rebellions of disobedient Israel? It will by and by be seen that these just anticipations are met by the facts of the case.

But it is not more certain that the Israelites in the wilderness of Sin possessed the art of writing or engraving upon rocks and stones, than that they possessed, also, time and opportunity for its exercise amidst these wilds, such as never were or could be possessed, before or since, by any other tribe or people. Encamped in this, or the adjoining deserts, during the space

of forty years, they had amplest leisure, and all needful appliances, to facilitate the work of chroniclers*; while the numbers of the workmen well solve the phenomenon of the multitudes, and repetitions, of inscriptions.† Regarded, however, as all the circumstances lead us to regard them, as daily chronicles of the eventful occurrences of each day ‡, one seeming difficulty presents itself which must not be overlooked, but which it requires only fair examination to explain. How, it may be asked, comes it, that we read, at the very entrance of the peninsula, upon the rocks of the Wady Mokatteb, not only the first miracle after the Exode, the healing of the waters of Marah, but its last miracle also, the plague of the fiery serpents? — a visitation

* Even Dr Lepsius, "who agrees with Professor Beer as to the nature of the inscriptions, regards them as *the work of a pastoral people*, and not of mere passing pilgrims; an opinion seemingly borne out by their number, their often elaborate, though rude, character, and the remote spots in which they are sometimes met with." — *Forty Days in the Desert in the Track of the Israelites*, p. 48. It has been shown that no "pastoral people" could subsist in Sinai without *extraordinary supplies*. Dr. Lepsius's admission, consequently, is fresh proof of the Israelitish origin of the inscriptions.

† "In a short time after leaving the mouth of Wady Maghara, the valley expands into a small plain, and again suddenly contracts. It is here, on the right-hand rocks, that the largest collection of the Sinaitic writings is to be found. They occur, indeed, in very considerable quantities, and must have been the work of a large body of men." — *Forty Days*, &c., p. 17.

‡ Not in point of fact, the elevations forbid this inference, but in their nature.

which occurred nearly forty years after, upon the confines of Kadesh Barnea, and of the land of promise? A moment's serious reflection upon "the manner of being" of Israel in the wilderness will solve this difficulty. The people, we know, were miraculously fed with manna from heaven: and why? because the wilderness yielded no food for the sustenance of man. No similar provision was made for their flocks and herds: and why? because, after the rains, the wildest wastes of Sinai abound, through every cleft and crevice, with a luxuriant spring of vegetation. The flocks and herds, accordingly, were maintained, as those of his father-in-law Jethro had been kept by Moses himself in this very wilderness, by roving over the whole land. But roving flocks necessarily imply roving shepherds. And while the main body of the people pursued their stated marches, or remained stationary in their camps, their flocks and shepherds, there cannot be a rational doubt, wandered at will over the peninsula.* And while these retraced their steps

* "One of the chief difficulties which I meet with in the narrative of Moses, is that of accounting for the subsistence of the numerous herds and flocks, that belonged to the retreating host. *We hear of no miraculous provision for their support*; and it seems incredible that they could have subsisted upon the scanty verdure afforded by the flinty soil of the Desert, after making all possible allowance for its deterioration by the physical changes of three thousand years. They were probably much less numerous than we are accustomed to suppose from the very general and

from the neighbourhood of Kadesh to that of Suez¹¹, what more natural or likely than for some faithful chronicler to register the plague of serpents beside the miracle at Marah? the record of "judgment without mercy" upon those who had despised mercy, and sinned so grievously against so gracious a benefactor?

In a vast majority of the Sinaïtic monuments stand two words, 𐤀 and 𐤍, the former at the beginning, the latter at the close, of each inscription: words which, from their position, and their incessant recurrence, whatever be their interpretation, must self-evidently stand as clues or key-notes to the sense. The first of these key-words is written in a great variety of forms, but its place in the inscriptions as the


indefinite language used in the Bible upon the subject. *And they were undoubtedly dispersed over the whole region lying between the long range of mountains, now known as Jebel Raha and Jebel Tih, on the East, and the Red Sea on the West. This might easily have been done, as the country seems not to have been peopled, and the march between Suez and the neighbourhood of Sinai was unmolested by enemies. The stations and encampments enumerated in the xxxiii. chapter of Numbers, were the head-quarters; while many of the people must always have been separated from the main body of the host, seeking food for their flocks of sheep and cattle in the neighbouring valleys.*"—*Olin's Travels in Arabia Petræa*, vol. i. p. 382, &c.

"Then, as now, it (the desert round Mount Seir) must have presented the same dreary waste, sand-hills beyond sand-hills, tufted with broom and other bushes, *affording excellent pasturage*; but, still, a dreary solitude, a howling wilderness."—*Lord Lindsay, Letters on Egypt, Edom, and the Holy Land*, vol. ii. pp. 22, 23.

grand initial formula, notwithstanding this variety, effectually secures against the possibility of its being mistaken. Upon my first inspection of Mr. Gray's inscriptions, judging simply from the forms of the characters, I read, in the initial term \square^{F} , the Hebrew word \square^{y} , *ôm*, "The People;" and, in the final term $|S|$, the ineffable Name, *Iao*, Jehovah: *the only two words* which could sustain and account for the prominence and frequency of their return. The first result of these two readings was, the immediate decyphermment, already before the reader, of the murmurings and miracle at Marah,—a decyphermment established independently by the recovery of the omitted figure of the wild ass. The after consequence was, the clear and consistent decyphermment of every inscription, at the head and foot of which these words occurred.

It was not until large progress had been made in the work of interpretation, and until proof upon proof had been accumulated of the Israelitish origin of the Sinaitic inscriptions, that Professor Beer's publication fell into my hands. Upon looking into his pages, my surprise was great indeed to find the plain characters \square^{F} , to my eye so nearly identical with the Hebrew \square^{y} , metamorphosed into the Hebrew word \square^{y} ,

shalum, "Peace;" * and the thousands and tens of thousands of unknown inscriptions, which fill the vallies, and clothe the rocks of Sinai, represented as containing, merely, the proper names† of some straggling Bedouin pilgrims, prefaced each, by a Christian, or more properly a Mahometan, salutation. Recovered from my first astonishment, I looked into the learned Professor's alphabet; which, as might well be expected, proved in goodly keeping with this "specimen venientis ævi." In this alphabet, based chiefly upon arbitrary hypothesis, I could

* I expressed my surprise at the time to the gentleman who first introduced Beer's treatise to my acquaintance, and informed me of his version of the initial ; adding that the word would prove to be *ôm*, not *shalum*, and the *quadruped* mentioned by Mr. Gray, to be the figure of a wild ass. Little was I aware that the book which my informant held in his hand, contained a duplicate of the inscription, with the figure of the animal.







† Prof. Beer's renderings of the inscriptions might be summarily disposed of by a single consideration. Many of the inscriptions are *common-places*: the same sentences repeated on different rocks, probably, too, distant from each other. On the Professor's theory, they are all proper names. It follows that his ideal pilgrims, not satisfied with clambering up the rocks, *under which they had paused to rest*, in order merely to engrave their names, must, in the cases referred to, have toiled from rock to rock, to repeat again and again the toilsome record of their pilgrimage. The author of the inscription illustrated by the wild ass, for example, must have carved, or dotted in, his own name, at least four times. Upon a consequence like this it is needless to offer one word of comment. Beer, however, does not shrink from it. "*Iste Amru fil. Choraischu figuram et nomen suum, ut alii horum hominum, plus semel eadem ratione saxis insculpsit.*" — p. 4.




detect but six, or, at the most, seven sound characters. The rest was one charming amalgamation of known forms with unknown powers, or of several wholly distinct known characters, under one and the same letter. My next step was to examine by what process our author converted 𐤀 into שלם . This initial key-word, I have already observed, while never to be mistaken, is written, in the Sinaïtic inscriptions, with the utmost admissible latitude of form : very generally in full, thus, 𐤀𐤔 ; sometimes contracted, thus, 𐤀𐤕 , or thus, 𐤀 ; and not unfrequently imperfect, thus 𐤀𐤕𐤀 , or thus 𐤀𐤕𐤀 , evidently owing to the writer not being at pains to complete it by the connecting stroke: a carelessness incident not uncommonly to frequency of repetition. This last form 𐤀𐤕𐤀 , let me at once into the secret of Professor Beer's discovery; who, mistaking the imperfectly formed character for *two* letters, assigned to its first limb 𐤀 the power of the Hebrew *schin*, to the second limb 𐤕 , that of the Hebrew *lamed*, and thus ingeniously obtained his own reading of the word in its general, and perfect, *biliteral* form 𐤀𐤕𐤀 , viz. the *triliteral* שלם , Peace.

Even a cursory glance over the initial 𐤀 *.

* Had Pr. Beer looked into the Samaritan alphabet, by many considered the old or Mosaic Hebrew, he would hardly have fallen into the

of these inscriptions, will show every impartial reader who will be at the pains to take it, that great variety of form which the German Professor has so strangely overlooked; and by overlooking which, he has brought darkness out of light, and reduced to senses the most insignificant and absurd, monuments the most awful and momentous in the annals of the world.

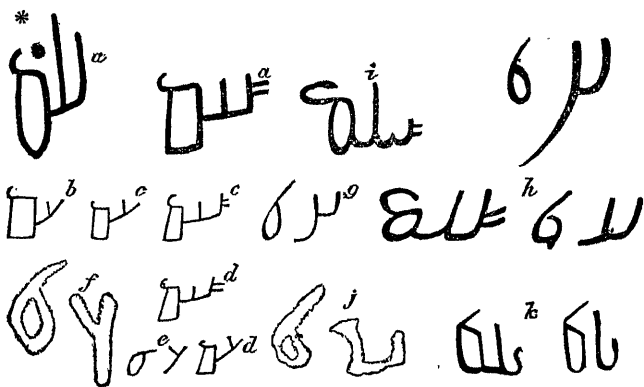
Widely, however, as we differ in our readings of this word, the learned Professor is, at least, agreed with me as to the power of its final letter, viz. , *m*, the Hebrew , *mim*. And this agreement, coupled with one point of union more, will now bring the matter to a short issue. Among the very few Sinaïtic characters in which our wholly independent alphabets coincide, the form  is recognized by Prof. Beer, and by me, as identical with the Hebrew *âin*, or . Now let the reader consult only Nos. 38, 77, 89, 165, and 171, of Mr. Gray's collection, or Nos. 87, 88, 89, in that of Professor Beer, and he will there find the very word in dispute,  , written

error of making two characters out of one. For the Samaritan *aleph* is ornamented with side-strokes exactly corresponding with those of the initial *âin* at Sinai, viz. , . And, if the power and unity of the character had not happened to be previously known, would supply the Professor's , equally well with the Sinaïtic character. This, indeed, is to be wise "above that which is written."

with the undisputed and indisputable Hebrew form **Y**.*

The simple fact is this, that the initial or capital letter is *ornamented* with side-strokes, **Y**, while the ordinary letter is written without them, **Y**. Happily, however, there is an occasional departure from this rule, as **Y**, **Y**, which disposes of the question.†

Om, "The People," then, being the initial word of the inscriptions, who that keeps in mind the chosen scriptural designation of God's "People, Israel," can rationally hesitate as to the true authorship of these mysterious records of the past? And as is their beginning, so also



* Beer, 110, 111. ^b Gray, 153. ^c 165. ^d 88, 89. * Niebuhr, Tab. xlix. ^f Wilson, No. i. ^g Beer, 88, 89. Gray, 88, 89: the second examples are *âmir*, but the initial monograms marked *a* are evidently identical.

† As Pr. Beer, in his own alphabet, admits the character **Y**, to be the Hebrew *âin*, and the character **Y**, to be the Hebrew *mim*, his *shatum*, on his own showing, is *ôm*, "The People."

is their close, *Iao*, Jehovah, being the sole final term which could adequately respond to the initial term *ôm*.

The opinion of Cosmas, then, so long, and so unjustly condemned, is, after all, the right and true judgment: namely, that the Sinaïtic inscriptions were the work of the ancient Israelites, during their forty years' wanderings in the wilderness. But from the settlement of their authorship there arises a further question, as to the language, or dialect, in which they were written. The word **IS**, *Iao*, answering to the Greek *Iaw*, in three letters, for the ineffable Name, instead of the Scriptural word יהוה, *Jehovah*, in four, alone sufficiently indicates that language, or dialect, not to have been the Hebrew of the Old Testament. Hebrew words and phrases, indeed, in common with all the Semitic dialects, it has been shown, and will hereafter more fully be proved, to contain, but its vocabulary is not the Mosaic Hebrew. But if it be not Hebrew, the reason of the case tells us that it must have been the ancient Egyptian: the vernacular idiom of the country and people, among whom the Israelites had sojourned for the term of eight generations, or of two hundred and fifteen years. To this conclusion, I have already shown, we are independently conducted, by the identity of the

Sinaitic alphabet with those of Masara and Rosetta. But the ancient Egyptian, like the ancient Hamyaritic, it will appear hereafter, was one of those primitive dialects of mankind, which, by a severe simplicity, by the nearly total absence of prepositions, conjunctions, inflexions, declensions, moods, tenses, voices, prefixes, affixes, and suffixes *, and what may not unappropriately be termed the accidents of speech †, prove their near relationship to a common origin, the “one language, and one speech,” which obtained before the confusion of tongues at Babel. ‡ Its near relation to the Hamyaritic is most apparent, in the number of purely Hamyaritic characters to be found, both upon the monuments of Egypt, and upon the rocks of Sinai. But the Hamyaritic itself is chiefly that portion of the Arabic, of which Arabic scholars, from Pocock downwards, have so often observed, that, while it occupies more than one half of all the Arabic lexicons, it rarely, if ever, is to be met with in any Arabic writers.

* The occasional occurrences of the sign of the future tense in verbs, and of the dual and plural numbers in nouns, are exceptions: sometimes doubtful exceptions.

† The phenomenon exists to this day in some remote districts of Italy, where the idiom (probably the remains of the Oscan or Etruscan) is a language of roots, altogether devoid of adjuncts.

‡ In no other conceivable way could the one primeval tongue become the common parent of idioms differing so widely in character and construction, as the Semitic, and the Indo-Scythian, families of speech.

This was the statement of the case made to the present writer, at Paris in 1844, by one of the first Arabic scholars in Europe, who had been studying Arabic for thirty years without being able to account for the anomaly; but observed, "The problem is now solved, this is the lost Hamyaritic."

In the decyphrement, therefore, of all primitive tongues, the Arabic lexicon, more than one half of which has been heretofore a dead letter*, is the proper standard of appeal.¹² And since the appeal, as will be hereafter experimentally shown, is attended with equal success in them all, it further follows, that all the primitive tongues are most nearly allied among themselves; while their severe simplicity of structure indicates divergence in the slightest possible degree from their common source, the one primeval language.

But if Israel in the wilderness still used the language of Egypt, how, it may be asked, are we to account for the rise of the Scriptural Hebrew? The answer seems easy and natural. The Scriptural Hebrew would appear to have been first imparted to Moses by Jehovah himself, upon the two tables of Commandments, and at the giving of the Law from Mount Sinai. The reason for

* "Præsertim cum tanta linguæ pars in desuetudinem abierit." — Pocock, *Spec. Hist. Arab.* p. 96. "The Arabians tell us that *the greatest part of it* (the Arabic) *has been lost.*" — Sale, *Prelim. Disc.* p. 34. edit. Oxon. 1806.

such a provision is to be found in the nature of the case. It was clearly the design of Divine Providence, from the first hour of the Exode, on the one hand, to *sever* the Israelites from all contact with the manners and idolatry of Egypt, whence they had so recently departed; and, on the other hand, to *isolate* them, amidst the idolatrous nations by whom they were to be surrounded in the land of promise. But no effectual severment or isolation could take place, so long as the language remained the same. And as, at Babel, Almighty God interposed miraculously, *by diversity of language*, to disperse mankind; so, by strict analogy, after the Exode, we might again expect Him to interpose, *by peculiarity of language*, to insulate His People Israel.

This natural anticipation appears to be met by more than one significant intimation of Scripture. Thus, in the eighty-first Psalm, which treats especially of the thunders of Sinai, and the giving of the Commandments, we read:

“ For this was a statute for Israel,
And a law of the God of Jacob:
This he ordained in Joseph for a testimony,
When he went out through the land of Egypt:
I heard a language I understood not.”*

Of the several interpretations of this passage, none is so simple, or so clear, as that which

* שפת לא ידעתי אשמע — Ps. lxxxi. 5, 6.

refers the "strange language" here spoken of, to the voice of Jehovah, speaking, from Sinai, to Moses and the people in the Hebrew tongue, to them, as yet, a new and unknown dialect. In perfect accordance with this passage, and with this interpretation of it, are the words of Zephaniah: "For then *will I turn to the people a pure language*: that they may all call upon the name of the Lord, to serve Him *with one consent*."* This prophecy may most justly be thus understood and applied: "As, at the beginning of your existence as a nation, I gave you 'a pure language' from Mount Sinai; so, at the end, I will restore you 'a pure language,' a vehicle of thought and expression meet to celebrate my praise, and in which to call upon my name." For this last reason, especially, the Hebrew of the Pentateuch, thenceforward to become the language of the whole Hebrew people, may be regarded as a pure language or idiom revealed from heaven, less simple, because more regularly constructed, than any of the primeval tongues; in order that no tongue polluted by heathen profligacy or idolatry might profane, by becoming their receptacle, the lively oracles of God.

* כי אז אהפך אל עמים שפה ברורה לקרא כלם בשם יהוה לעבדו
שכם אחד. Zeph. iii. 9.—

PASSAGE OF THE RED SEA: HORSE, AND FLIGHT, OF PHARAOH.

“For the horse of Pharaoh went in, with his chariots and his horsemen, into the sea; and the Lord brought again the waters of the sea upon them.”—*Exod.* xv. 17.

Were not commentators on Scripture so prone to be wise above what is written, it might be taken for granted of the expression here used by Moses, “the horse of Pharaoh,” that its literal would be accepted as its proper sense: that the war-horse of the king himself was here intended. The literal sense, however, was too plain and simple for some interpreters. Notwithstanding the unquestionable soundness of the Hebrew reading *סוס פרעה*, and of its Septuagint version, *ἵππος Φαραώ*, “The horse of Pharaoh,” as it is correctly rendered in our English Bible, and notwithstanding, moreover, the separate mention, in immediate contradistinction, of “Pharaoh’s horsemen” in the succeeding clause, we are called upon to understand the phrase, “the horse of Pharaoh,” as put both for his horses and his horsemen: in other words, for the whole cavalry of the Egyptian army.*¹³

* The Commentary of Lucas Brugensis upon *Exod.* xv. 19., may be cited as an exemplar vitiis imitabile of this fashion of interpretation. See final note 13.

Instinctively averse to all such trifling and tampering with the plain text of Scripture, it was with an interest and satisfaction not easily described that, early in my acquaintance with Mr. Gray's Sinaïtic inscriptions, I came, in his 86th No., upon what the previous decyphermment of his Marah inscription and others enabled me to recognize as a contemporary commentary on the very passage of Exodus in question. In the fourth line of this inscription, the eye was arrested by a hieroglyphical character in the form of a horse. The Arabic *fa*, which formed the head and neck of the animal, being followed by *q*, the Greek *rho*, and by the Hebrew *ayin*, the royal name of *Pharaoh* apparently stood before me. To ascertain whether the contents of the inscription tallied with the name was the next and instant object. The decyphered inscription proved to be a record of the passage of the Red Sea, and of the vain attempt of Pharaoh to escape from the returning waters by flight on horseback.

The characters of this inscription were all sufficiently clear, and being mostly letters of known forms, on the principle of assigning to them their known powers, it was decypherable with comparative facility. The last word alone

presented an impediment; for it was a monogram, and with the disentangling of monograms I was not, at this period, familiar. The sense required by the whole context was *horse*, or *war-horse*. But some time elapsed before I discovered that the last word was رباط, *rabat*; and that the Arabic word رباط, signifies "A horse of ancient race," or, "Horses prepared for war."*

Previously to the completion of the decyphering, the action of the hieroglyphic horse had perplexed me. As he seemed neither to advance nor recede, I had set down the neck thrown backwards, and the disparted fore-legs, as symbolical, perhaps, of the haughty bearing of his rider. The full decyphering first undeceived me. The king is in the act of retreat; his horse has just received the check of the rein, by which the head is thrown back, and the fore-legs are parted, while the hind-legs remain as yet unmoved. The whole action is one familiar to every horseman, who has suddenly and violently checked his horse.

More than a year after the decyphering of

* رباط, Equi parati bello, et Antiquæ stirpis equus. The second definition, applying to a *single horse*, marks that the first may have applied also, originally, to a *single war-horse*.

this Pharaonic record, a copy of another Sinaïtic inscription, discovered, not in the Wady, but in the Djebel Mokatteb, was sent me by a friend. It was taken from a fac-simile made with great care and exactness on the spot, by artists in the train of a French nobleman, le Comte d'Antraigues, then (May, 1779) travelling with his suite in the peninsula; and was published originally in 1811, in the Posthumous Letters of J. G. Von Müller, the historian of Switzerland, a name so eminent in literature, before, at the call of Napoleon, he exchanged the path of "quiet and delightful studies" for the cares of state.* Remarkable as is the history of this inscription, and still more so the appearance of the characters, it seems to have lain altogether unnoticed by the learned, probably owing to its isolated publication in an unusual vehicle, a collection of miscellaneous family letters. Its best introduction now will be in the words of the Comte d'Antraigues himself, from his letter conveying the inscription to his friend Von Müller.

* See *Biographie Universelle*, Article J. G. Müller. The poet's moral here holds true —

"Known him I have, but in his happier hour
Of social freedom, ill-exchanged for power."

“ A cinq heures du matin, le 14 Mai, 1779, je fis lever toute ma caravane, et nous nous rendîmes au Dshebel el Moukateb. Ce sont deux rochers *très-élevés*, taillés à pie [pic?], séparés l'un de l'autre de 50 pas. Il paroît que leur base a été creusée par l'action des eaux ; mais, dans tout le désert, il n'y a pas que 5 puits d'eau saumâtre ; on n'aperçoit que des montagnes d'un sable fin, et imprégnées de sel, que le vent disperse et accumule à son gré. Ces rochers, chargés de caractères taillés en relief, n'en porte aucun depuis leur base jusqu'à la hauteur de 14 pieds 2 pouces. La vallée a 547 toises de Paris* dans toute sa longueur. Les rochers sont couverts de caractères *jusqu'à leurs sommets* : les lignes sont droites, mais leurs extrémités se replient jusqu'à la jonction de la ligne supérieure, et forment une écriture à sillons. Sur le rocher droit, en venant de Tor, il y a en tout 67 lignes ; 41 sur le rocher à gauche. Les caractères ont un pouce de relief, et un pied de longueur. A côté gauche, il y a, dans la partie du rocher la plus élevée, les caractères qu'on nomme le titre. Ce qui leur a fait donner ce nom, c'est ce que les lettres qui le composent, ont

* 1094 yards.




6 pieds de hauteur, et trois pouces de relief. *Je les ai fait dessiner avec la plus grande exactitude.* Il faudroit six mois d'un travail opiniâtre, pour dessiner la totalité de ces caractères: c'est un livre unique peut-être sous le ciel, et l'histoire d'un peuple peut-être inconnu.*

The scale alone of these records on the cliffs of the Djebel Mokatteb, apart from every other consideration, bespeaks the importance attached to them by their authors. A space of six feet for the characters of the first line, styled by the Arabs the heading or title, and of forty feet for the remaining forty lines of the shorter of the two inscriptions, with the necessary allowance for the intervals between the lines, and a height of fourteen feet from the lowest line to the ground, will give an elevation of, at least, from eighty to one hundred feet for the monument. Of this Von Müller has preserved the only part as yet copied, viz. the first line.

At the instance of a friend who happened to

* Extract of a letter from M. le Comte d'Antraigues, ap. J. G. Müller, tom. vi. p. 330. Von Müller saw no improbability in the assignment of an Israelitish origin to these monuments: "Wie aber wenn in Beziehung auf den Aufenthalt Israels: zwei Tafeln; Segen und Flüche; oder Geschichtserzählung?" — *Ib.* p. 331. The writer whom *Napoleon* summoned to the offices, successively, of Secretary of State for Westphalia, and Minister of Public Instruction, will hardly, in our day, be taxed with credulity. At least, if he be, the charge will assuredly recoil upon the taxers.

be with me when it arrived, I attempted the decyphermment of this line. And, after the experience acquired in previous experiments upon Mr. Gray's, and Professor Beer's, Sinaitic inscriptions, I was not a little surprized and disappointed to find this single line baffle every attempt to unravel so much as the first word. After repeated trials, I told my friend that, without some collateral light, further efforts would be vain; that the characters, notwithstanding some air of resemblance, were so unlike, in reality, to those of all the other Sinaitic inscriptions, that their alphabet afforded no clue; and that the only opinion I could hazard was that the inscription was hieroglyphic; that one character, at least, strongly indicated a representation of something living, though whether animal or insect I could not say. I pointed out the character. Upon its vitality we agreed. The attempt at decyphermment was renewed after my friend's departure, but without the least success. The whole line was analyzed, without the decyphermment of a single word: until, at length, the possibility occurred to me that the inscription might have been printed in Von Müller's "Posthumous Letters" *upside down*; an inversion of which I had found occasional examples. It was barely a possibility, but I acted

on it. I turned the volume upside down, when the first glance told me my conjecture was right. The well-known Sinaitic characters now came out in their accustomed forms. The nondescript hieroglyphic, which, even in its inverted posture, had struck me as indicating life*, proved to be the rude representation, or misrepresentation, of a horse, with his head between his fore-legs, in the act of running away: while hieroglyphic horses' limbs, and human limbs, seemed interspersed along the whole line, after the manner of Egypt, as seen on the Rosetta Stone. I now once more tried the lexicons, and with wholly different result. The words became, at once, decypherable; and the subject proved to be identical with that of Mr. Gray's inscription, No. 68.; namely, the passage of the Red Sea, with the horse and flight of Pharaoh. In the centre of the line stands the tyrant's name, written with the Arabic *f*,  the Hamyaritic *r*, , and the Hebrew *āin*, .† His horse's

* The result, in this instance, proved the soundness of a canon laid down by a high authority in art: viz. that, however rude the delineation, where *life* is intended, *life* will appear.

† The Hebrew form פֶּרַעֲה, *Pharaoh*, the form of the name employed in this inscription, is still an Arabic form of the name: “فرعون pro فریج” *Pharao (in versu Omajjae Ben-ali-Zalt).*—*Kam. ap. Freytag*, in rad. فرع.

Upon the omission of the diacritic point over the و (*fa*) in this inscription, and of the diacritic points generally in all the primitive monuments, I

limbs, his own limbs, his helmet, and the royal emblem of the Pharaohs, the hawk's head, fill up the picture; the subject of which is Pharaoh's headlong flight from the returning waters of the Red Sea*, first on horseback, and finally on foot. But as this belongs to the decyphering of the inscription, an interpretation of it is submitted, Plate IV. p. 90., followed by the necessary remarks.

In the inscription from the Wady Mokatteb (Gray, 68.), Pharaoh was represented, hieroglyphically, in the act and moment of reining back his horse to fly. In this inscription from

would observe once for all, for the satisfaction of readers conversant with the modern Arabic only, that the absence of the diacritic points in Arabic MSS. is the acknowledged test of their antiquity, the most ancient MSS. being uniformly unpointed. Upon this head, and upon the high antiquity of the *Niskhi* or common Arabic characters, erroneously supposed modern, See *M. S. de Sacy*, ap. Final Note 2.

* Arab tradition is always worthy of attention. The drowning of Pharaoh, and the spot where he perished, are mentioned by Makrizi, the historian of Egypt, in his account of the Wady and town of Faran: "It is one day's journey (in a straight line) from the sea of Kolzoum (the gulf of Suez), the shore of which is there called 'the shore of the sea of Faran.' There it was that Pharaoh was drowned by the Almighty."—*Makrizi ap. Burckhardt, Syria*, pp. 617, 618. Makrizi adds, "Between the city of Faran and the Tyh are two days' journey;—a large river flows by." Upon this Burckhardt observes: "There is no rivulet, but, in winter-time, the valley is completely flooded; and a large stream of water, collected from all the lateral valleys of Wady el Sheikh, empties itself, through Wady Feiran, into the gulf of Suez, near the *Birket Faraoun*." This whole passage merits attention, in any attempt to fix the point of passage at the Exode.

the Djebel Mokatteb is contained, at its opening, a pictorial representation of the sequel; of the circumstances attending his own and his horse's flight, apparently meant to express to the eye the last vain efforts of despair. It has been remarked of this heading, that the whole line is hieroglyphical, after the manner of Egypt. But while the constant introduction of hieroglyphic characters into the Sinaïtic and other rock inscriptions, is a fact generally known and recognized by orientalists, it is one necessarily less familiar to the general reader. In first calling public attention, therefore, to this feature, it becomes essential, 1st, that the general reader should not only be aware of the usage, but should keep in mind its acknowledged existence, at Sinai; and 2dly, that the particular examples of its existence at Sinai should, where practicable, be illustrated and verified by identical exemplifications of the same usage from Egypt.

1. The existence of the usage has been well laid down by Prof. Beer, in a canon already noticed; who remarks that, in the Sinaïtic inscriptions, letters frequently form parts of figures (of men or animals), and that figures (of men or animals) as frequently compose groups of letters. Had the learned Professor been as fully borne out in other points as in this statement, instead of

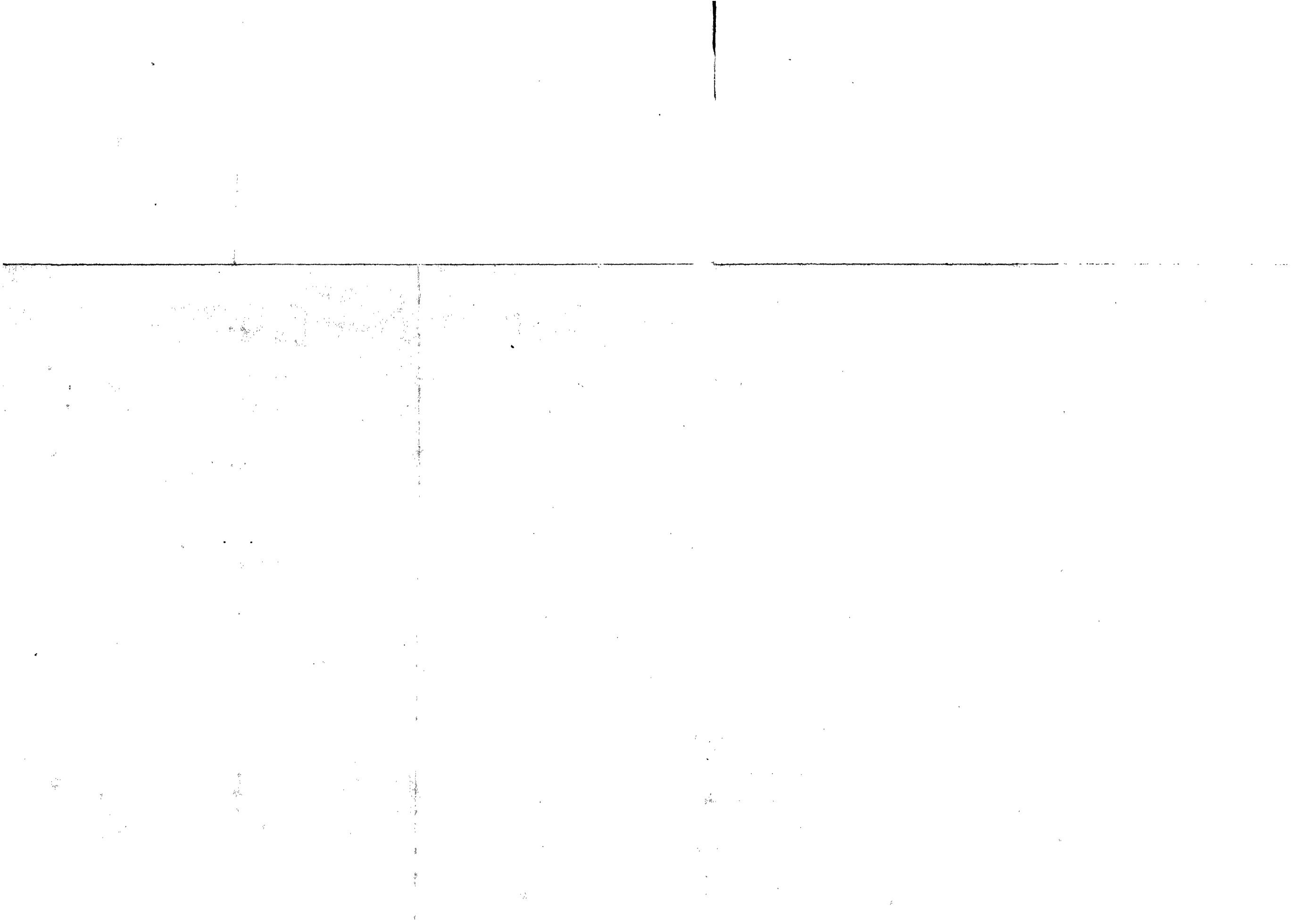
every thing, he would have left little to be done by others. It would be easy to multiply authorities ; but as the point is not only indisputable, but undisputed, we may safely rest the fact of the usage upon his statement.

2. The application of the hieroglyphics of Egypt to the elucidation of those at Sinai, is the next principle to be established ; and for the establishment of this principle we have a sure groundwork in the occurrence at Sinai of the most noted and characteristic of all Egyptian monograms, the *crux ansata*, or sacred tau.

The Pharaonic inscription now before us, offers, perhaps, the best opportunity in existence of bringing this principle to the test. For if "Israel (indeed) came out of Egypt," and if the flight of Pharaoh was to be represented by Israelitish artists, there is every rational ground to presuppose that the regal symbols of the Pharaohs, after the manner of the Egyptians, would appear on such a monument. The facts coincide with the anticipation. The favourite hieroglyphic symbol of the hawk's head, or the hawk's head and wings, stands, intermingled with the limbs of man and horse, conspicuously along the entire line ; while the flight of the tyrant is depicted by a series of hieroglyphic legs, the last of which have their fac-simile in the legs of Ptolemy

Epiphanes upon the Rosetta Stone, representing, after the Egyptian fashion, the ascent of the king himself up the stairs of the temple at Memphis. For the more complete establishment of the correspondence, and fuller satisfaction of readers new to the subject, I have placed, in the accompanying Plate IV. over the chief symbols of this Sinaïtic monument, traced fac-similes of the corresponding symbols found upon the Pharaonic and Ptolemaic monuments of Egypt.

It is remarkable, in connection with the emphatic mention in the Song of Moses of "the horse of Pharaoh," that in the entire of the hieroglyphic characters in the Comte d'Antraigues' inscription, there occurs but one perfect figure, namely, that of Pharaoh's run-away horse; which, in verification of Prof. Beer's second canon, is framed of a monogram of letters forming the word *شمار*, *mumahak*, "a horse excelling in speed." The other hieroglyphics consist, either of the body without the limbs, or the limbs without the body, the hieroglyphic for the rider occupying, in one instance, the vacant space. All this, we know, is conformable with the prescriptive usage of Egypt; and Egyptian precedent, it might be presumed, would preclude all liability to captious objections. In treating a new subject, however, or rather the application of a known



GLOSSARY TO THE COMTE D'ANTRAIGUE'S INSCRIPTION.

كص, *kasa*, Fugit : in fugam conversus fuit.
Fleeing : turning to flee.

عب, يعبوب, *aba, yaabbub*, Equus velox : simulque longus.
A swift long horse.

شب, *shaba*, Anteriores pedes simul sustulit præ alacritate *equus*.
Lifting up both forefeet together through alertness (*a horse*).

كضكض, *kazkaza*, Celeriter incessit.
"Going swiftly."

سوار, سور, *suwar*, Eques. "A rider." A horseman.

وهص, *wahs*, Violenter project. Dejecit.
"Throwing with violence. Dashing to the ground."

فرع, فرعه, *faraā*, PHARAOH. فرع, *pro* فرعون (*in versu Omajjae-Abi-Zali*).—
Kam. ap. Freytag.

سلا, *sata*, Amplis diductisque passibus incessit *equus*.
"Going with long steps (*a horse*)."

ممهك, *mumahhak*, Egregius cursu *equus*.
A horse excelling in speed.

عجر, *ajara*, Citò præterivit *equus*, ut præ metu.
"Scampering swiftly by (*as a horse when frightened*)."

























































وطيح, *watacha*, Violenter pepulit trusitque suis manibus.
Removing forcibly, thrusting away with the hands.

نعب, منعب, *nahaba*, Iter fecit, et quidem accelerando : manahib, Celer
incessus, acceleratum iter.
"Walking, going, travelling (*especially quick*)."

خون, خون, *kūd, kūdxat*, Cassis, galea. A casque, a helmet.

خون, *khūd*, "A helmet."—*Wilkins ap. Richardson.*

GLOSSARY OF LOWER INSCRIPTION IN PL. IV.

- 

 am, Populus: plebs. The People.
- 

 marâ, Profectus fuit *per regionem*.
 Journeyeth *through the region*.
- 




 ud, Territus fuit. Terrorem concepit.
 Terror-stricken. Filled with terror.
- 




 zuâ, Habenâ antrorsum movit *camelum suum ut melius*
celeriusque incederet.
 Throwing forward the rein, *that the camel may quicken*
his pace.
- 


 ma, Aqua. Water.
- 



 Iao, Jehovah. Res extans: Persona: Hypostasis.
 A Being: Person: Hypostasis.
- 



 am Populus. "The People."
- 



 am Populus. "The People."
- 



 manr, Tentavit, experimento probavit.
 Essayeth. Tries by experiment.
- 


 ma, Aqua: Water.
- 




 PHARAOH, or פֶּרַעַה, sus Pharaoh. (Exod.
 (xv. 1.)
 "The horse of Pharaoh" [if the *body* of the horse be letters.]
- 




 wari, Retrocessit. Retrograde.
- 




 ana, Habenâ tenuit, retinuit, *equum*.
 Reining in, reining back, *a horse*.
- 




 rabat, Equi parati ad bellum. Antiquæ stirpis *equus*.
 War-horses. *A horse* of ancient race.

principle to a new subject, it is right to anticipate objections; and due to truth, not only to anticipate, but, where practicable, to place it above them.

Upon this principle, I have placed over the *bodiless* horse in this Pharaonic monument, a *bodiless* camel, forming the obverse of a Bactrian medal. The medal is perfect: yet the head, neck, and limbs of the animal alone appear on the obverse, comprizing, at the same time, the hieroglyphic of its figure, and the letters of its name; while, so perfect is the effect, that every one who has seen it (and for the sake of evidence this medal has been submitted to many without note or comment) instantly has recognized the camel by its *disjecta membra*. This one example from Central Asia establishes the rule; and with the rule, the strictly analogous examples delineated in the heading of the Djebel Mokatteb inscription.*

* The colossal scale of the characters in this heading, renders it impossible that there could be mistake or illusion in the reduction. Upon a scale of such magnitude, the forms of the hieroglyphics must be so pronounced, that the artist's only task was fidelity in the reduction. The published copy bears all the marks of having been taken (as the Comte d'Antraigues states) "*avec la plus grande exactitude*," and by a skilful hand. The drawing of the patella, or knee-pan, in one of the hieroglyphics, was pointed out by a draughtsman as designed with anatomical fidelity. The prominence of this part, in a correct drawing of the leg, is a principle of modern art: "*The knee-pan must be shown, with the knitting thereof.*" — *Peacham on Drawing*.

But the high importance of this heading, and, not improbably, the yet higher importance of the still uncopied forty line inscription over which it stands, suggested a further, and yet more searching, experiment. It occurred to me that if the hieroglyphics here were designed with anything of that anatomical accuracy so eminently characteristic, save in conventional forms, of the hieroglyphic symbols of Egypt, the completion of those bodiless figures by a skilful hand, might restore in full the form and action of the animal intended, which could be *indicated* only by the hieroglyphic letters. For the object being to combine pictorial with alphabetic representations, the amount of the resemblance was clearly limited by the necessity of the case ; since it is obvious that, in inscriptions of this compound nature, no more of the animal could be given, than could be given without interference with the alphabetic functions of the letters ; and, *vice versâ*, no more of the letters could be designed, than could be designed without interference with the pictorial indications of the animal.

These reflections suggested the thought of submitting the Comte d'Antraigues' inscription to an eminent artist, for the purpose of ascertaining whether the experiment which I contemplated could be made. The experiment was

1.

As published originally, inverted.

[illegible]

Z. 283^u Brief.

2

In true position.

[illegible]

3

With the hieroglyphics partly filled up.

With the hieroglyphics partly filled up.

tried, and its result placed in my hands with the remark, that one thing was certain, that the filling up of the figures was strictly what the action of the hieroglyphic limbs required, and that an artist could not correctly complete the hieroglyphic horses, &c., in any other way. To present the filled-up draught to the best advantage for examination, my friend suggested a mode of distinguishing the additions from the original, and made a copy of the inscription completed on this principle. In the process of completion, the anatomical correctness of the imperfect outlines became, in some parts, strikingly observable, the forms and proportions coming fully out, as soon as a touch of the pencil had introduced the proper supplemental line or lines. An attentive comparison of the fragmental original with the filled-up copy *, will enable artists, and readers conversant with the fragmental hieroglyphics of Egypt, to judge for themselves. A suggestion here occurs which I would venture to submit. Might it not be well to repeat this ex-

* See Plate V. In this lithograph, the inscription is represented in three stages : 1, as published *inverted*, in Müller's " Posthumous Letters ;" 2, in its correct position ; and 3, with the hieroglyphic limbs, — where the figure intended, and the mode of completing it, seemed clear, — filled up in dotted lines. By this arrangement it is hoped the reader may be better able to accompany the steps of the decyphering described in the text.

periment, by filling up the hieroglyphic fragments of figures in Egyptian monuments in a similar way? The conventional stiffness of their human forms would be a hindrance, but in other animal forms I suspect the results would be most satisfactory; while, if they prove so (the introduction of limbs, &c., into the hieroglyphics of Egypt being a point universally acknowledged), they would decisively corroborate this first essay to *bring out* the pictorial representations, hinted at, rather than expressed, by the fragmental figures in this kind of writing.

Another suggestion of graver moment remains to be made; namely, the desirableness of copies being obtained of the two great inscriptions in the Djebel Mokatteb mentioned by the Comte d'Antraigues, the one in forty-one, the other in sixty-seven lines. For, while the inscriptions of the Wady Mokatteb, or "Written Valley," have been repeatedly visited, and partially copied, those of the Djebel Mokatteb, or "Written Mountain," would seem to have remained, from that noble voyager's day to our own, wholly and most unaccountably neglected.

With regard to the forty-one line inscription, especially, the contents of its heading, and the number of the lines or verses, might suggest a possibility, the remotest hope of whose realization

ought to awaken interest over Christian Europe; the possibility, I mean, that these forty-one lines might prove to be no other than the forty, or forty-two verses of "The Song of Moses," "graven with an iron pen, and lead in the rock for ever." I state this barely as a possibility. I should, for my own part, have placed the likelihood much higher, had it not been for the reflection that, out of nearly two hundred Sinaitic inscriptions, I have not met with a single passage or text of Scripture. Imagery, in the manner of Scripture, indeed, abounds; but not one passage from the Pentateuch, not one entire sentence discoverable in the Old Testament. With fair minds, this admission may, in some degree, accredit the decyphermments themselves; inasmuch as *arbitrary* decyphermments of *Israelitish monuments* would (as our experience in other quarters shows) be sure to abound in texts and quotations from the books of Moses. The cause of the omission seems obvious, and would go far to fix, independently, the chronology of the Sinaitic inscriptions, namely, that they were engraved, if not before the composition, before the publication (if the expression be allowable) of the Pentateuch. Notwithstanding, however, this unexpected blank, the contents of "the title," and the coinciding number of the lines or verses,

still oblige me to state, and to cherish the possibility, that this forty-one line inscription may be "THE SONG OF MOSES."

THE MIRACLE OF THE "FEATHERED FOWLS."

(Exod. xvi. 13.; Numb. xi. 31. 32; Ps. lxxviii. 27.)

The Hebrew word שָׁלוּ (arabicè سلوا, *salwa*), the name of the winged creatures provided as food for the Israelites by this miracle, is rendered "quails" in our authorized version. In this rendering our translators follow the Septuagint, the Vulgate, and all the ancient versions. It has with it, also, the authority of Josephus. Yet the true signification of the word has been treated as an unsettled question by commentators of name. Ludolf, followed by Scheuchzer, and by Bishop Patrick, advanced the opinion that *salu* should be translated *locusts*. The point has been argued by Ludolf with much ingenuity, and more erudition. The opinion, however, is noticed here only to show that, in the judgments of an eminent orientalist, and of a sound English critic, the original word admits of more than one interpretation. Since the word itself, as the name of

some species of winged creature, occurs in Scripture only in connection with this miracle, its sense was the more liable to be mistaken by interpreters, there being no collateral light by which to fix the meaning. The proofs, however, supplied by the Old Testament, that the *salu* of the Exode were not insects, but birds of some kind fit for the food of man, may safely be pronounced conclusive against the theory of the locusts: for it was *flesh*, such as they had eaten in Egypt, that the Israelites desired to eat; and it was *flesh* (שׂאֵר), the Psalmist informs us, that was rained down on them from heaven, the flesh of "winged fowls" (עוֹף כְּנָף):

"He rained flesh upon them as dust;
And winged fowls, as the sand of the sea." *

The miraculous supply, therefore, consisted of vast flocks of birds; the only question being as to the species. On the face of the case, two considerations militate strongly against the received version.

First, as we read that the Israelites "spread them all abroad for themselves round about the camp,"† evidently to preserve them for future use by drying them in the sun, the birds must have been of a kind capable of being preserved by this process. But every species of the quail tribe,

* Ps. lxxviii. 27.

† Num. xi. 32.

from their peculiar delicacy and fatness, is, beyond most other birds, incapable of being preserved by drying; and, as Bp. Patrick justly observes, would be *corrupted*, instead of being preserved, by exposure to the heat of the sun. The assumption that they were not "spread abroad," but buried in the burning sands (a process described by Maillet), may be dismissed without comment as contrary to the Scriptural account.

But, 2dly, the words of Moses, "He that gathered least, gathered ten homers," will be found, on due examination, altogether incompatible with the idea of a bird of so diminutive a size as the quail, even of the largest kind. As this difficulty has been hitherto overlooked, it becomes necessary to expose it more fully. The difficulty lies in the scale of the measure specified, the homer or omer. We will take Mr. Parkhurst's account: "חֹמֶר, a *chomer* or *homer*, the largest measure of capacity; in which, consequently, many things were frequently jumbled together. It was equal to ten *baths* or *ephahs*, and to about 75 gallons 5 pints English." The omer, therefore, was a measure several sizes larger than an English hogshead. Now, within the space of "two days and one night," the least successful of the Israelites secured birds enough

to fill *ten* of these capacious measures, or to the amount of 750 gallons. As they were taken unprepared by the miracle, and were unprovided, therefore, with nets, they could avail themselves only of their hands, armed with sticks or other weapons; a method which, as the subjoined vignette will show, they would have learned in Egypt.*



* The scene here represented, meets also an objection urged by Bp. Patrick against *salu* meaning *birds*, founded on the Hebrew word סָלַח which he understands, with our version, in the sense of *gathering*: "And they *gathered* the quails. By this it is evident that they gathered something lying upon the ground, and not flying in the air; for we do not *gather* things there, but *take* or *catch* them." The root סָלַח , however,

But for a single Israelite, in this way, and in this space of time, to kill quails enough to fill twelve hogsheads, would be in itself a miracle. The birds, therefore, of whatever kind they were, *must* have been of a magnitude very different from that of the largest of the quail species; of a magnitude, in other words, sufficient to allow the possibility of one man killing, with the hand, in two days and a night, as many birds as would be required to fill twelve or fourteen hogsheads.

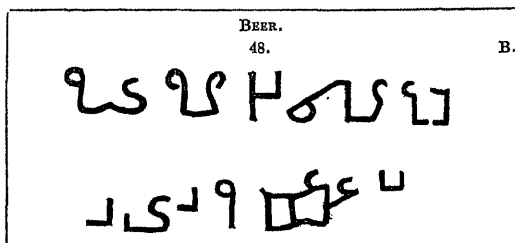
Before I had weighed the first of these difficulties, or perceived the second, not having been led to examine the question critically, I had acquiesced in the received versions of the word *salu*, and taken it for granted that the birds intended by it were quails. I was first led to doubt the received rendering, by the occurrence of a word at the opening of a two-line inscription. The word was *نهام*, *nuham*; its definition, "the name of a bird of a reddish colour resembling a goose." Observing no fewer than three examples of this inscription, taken from different rocks, the contents promised to be answerably

(*s* in Kal) signifies *collegit ad se*, *contraxit*, *retraxit*, *drawing towards one-self*, *catching*, *dragging back*: the very action of the Egyptian fowler in the wood-cut, who catches and drags towards him the wounded wild geese with his left hand, while he darts his throw-stick at others with his right. It is curious thus to find, in an Egyptian scene, so complete an exposition of a difficult, and hitherto misinterpreted, passage of Scripture.

important, or at least to throw light upon the opening word. The anticipation was fully justified. The second word was بحير or بحري, *bahar, bahari*, "the sea; marine, maritime; of or from the sea." These readings recalled to mind a passage in the Book of Numbers, with which they so remarkably coincide: "And there went forth a wind from the Lord, and brought *salu* from the sea." If the inscriptions be commemorative of the miracle, the words *nuham bahari*, *nuhams* from the sea, explain the obscure Hebrew term שָׁלַח, *salu*, by showing the miraculous supply to have consisted of flocks, not of quails, but of the casarca, or ruddy goose, — a bird of the goose species, but of stork-like height. It is thus described: "The casarca, or ruddy goose, is larger than a mallard, and seems even larger than it really is, from the length of wing, *and standing high on its legs*; the neck encircled with a collar of black, inclining to deep rufous on the throat; the breast and sides are pale rufous; the legs long and black. This species is found in all the southern parts of Russia and Siberia in plenty. In winter it migrates into India, and returns northward in spring. The flesh is thought very good food."*

* Encycl. Brit. art. Anser.

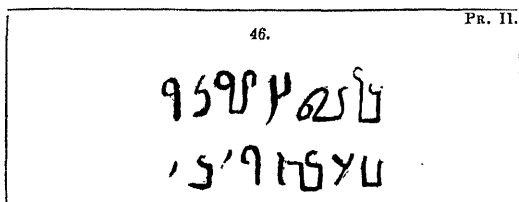
No. III.



נחמ אביר
הא עמ

The red geese ascend [from] the sea
Lusting the people eat on at them.

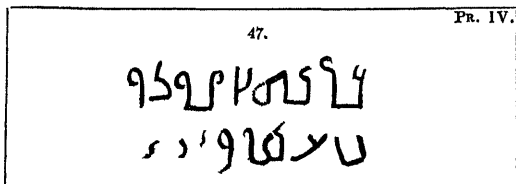
No. IV.



נחמ אביר
הא עמ


The red geese ascend [from] the sea
Lusting the people devour till nought is left.


No. V.





נחמ אביר
הא עמ


The red geese ascend [from] the sea
Lusting the people feed to repletion.

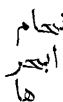
 נחם, *nuham*, Nomen avis rubræ, quæ formâ anserem refert.
 "Name of a reddish bird resembling a goose."*


 באר, *bahar*, Mare, بحري Marine. (This, and the
 first word, answer, apparently, to our "sea-fowl.")

 הָ, *hā*, Desiderio ejus captus fuit; desideravit.
 Inflamed with desire of any thing; lusting after.

 אָם, *am*, Populus: plebs. "The People."

 רָחוּ, *rahū*, Perseveravit in edenda una re; *pecul. grue.*
 Persevering in eating of one thing; especially of
stork.†

 אָרָם, *aram*, i. q. אָכַל, *Edil*, voravit, absumpsit, ut nihil reliquum fuerit.
 Eating, devouring, consuming, until nothing is left.

 וָרָא, *wara*, Repletus fuit cibo. Replete with food.

* Can the two birds in the Frontispiece, which Beer takes for ostriches, be representations of the *nuham*, or long-legged red goose? If so, they illustrate the miracle.

† Especially of *stork*. There is an agreement of congruity between this definition, and the appearance of the *stork-like* ruddy goose.

* The completion of the decypherment of this triple inscription*, it will now be seen, corroborates the idea indicated by its first line: namely, that, whether the casarca, or a bird similar in kind from Egypt, was intended by the *salu* of Moses, or *nuham* of the Wady Mokatteb, the miracle of "the feathered fowls" is here intended and recorded.

If the two great difficulties opposed to the idea of the *salu* of Moses signifying quails, be now examined by the light thus obtained from Sinai, both will be found to disappear. For, first,

* The three inscriptions obviously record one and the same thing; as Beer, by placing them in juxtaposition, has correctly perceived and admitted: while the complete identity in all three in the first line, combines with the circumstantial variations, in each, of the second line, in a way to give peculiar force to the evidences of this decypherment. In the inscription No. 48., the break between the first two characters marking out the first to be the Hebrew ל, fixes the true reading of the first word, viz. *nuham*, which the continuous line in Nos. 46, 47., might otherwise have rendered less certain. But the second line, opening as it does in all with the same word, and closing in each with a different word (unless the characters be defective) is very striking. For the three closing words, if read אֶרֶן אֶרֶן אֶרֶן , *raha*,^a or *aran* or *aram*, וְרָא , *wara*, are similar in force, each of them denoting the one idea of greediness and repletion: viz. וְרָא , *Perseveravit in edenda una re*, *Perseverance in eating one thing*; אֶרֶן , i. q. אָל , *Edit, voravit, absumpsit ut nihil reliquum fuerit*, *Eating, devouring, consuming, until nothing was left*; and וְרָא , *Repletus fuit cibo*, *Replete with food*.

^a This word reads רָהִי but the first ל may stand only for the vowel point, as in the Rabbinical Hebrew. I would remark here, of the Sinaïtic inscriptions generally, that many of the vowels appear to discharge the office only of the Hebrew vowel points.

the flesh of the goose is as peculiarly adapted for the process of drying, as that of the quail is unfitted for it; and might be hardened, instead of corrupted, by exposure to the sun. And, secondly, with reference to the enormous supply of "ten homers," collected in two days and a night by a single man, the magnitude even of the ruddy goose, contrasted with that of the quail, substitutes an easy probability for a physical impossibility; since the latter hypothesis would imply a slaughter of, perhaps, twenty thousand quails, where the former would not require one tenth, perhaps not one twentieth, of the number. It may deserve notice, in connection with the latter possibility, that the Indians on the Hudson river are known to average as many as two hundred geese in a day brought down by their guns, without any of the advantages providentially afforded to the Israelites.*

But the light apparently thrown on this great miracle of the Exode, by the Wady Mokatteb inscriptions, is further important, as most satisfactorily explaining a text which has perplexed all the commentators, and of which no satisfactory explanation has yet been given. The reader will probably anticipate my reference to Numb. xi. 31.: "And there went forth a wind from the

* Enc. Brit.

Lord, and brought *sahu* from the sea, and let them fall by the camp, as it were a day's journey on this side, and as it were a day's journey on the other side, round about the camp; and, as it were, *two cubits high*, upon the face of the earth." The extravagant supposition entertained by some, regarding this most difficult text, viz. that, by the expression "two cubits high upon the face of the earth," we are to understand that the birds lay literally piled one upon another, to the depth of between three and four feet, over an area, on all sides, of from twenty to thirty miles, carries with it its own confutation. For, without questioning its possibility, if God so willed, such a supply would have provisioned, not millions only, but tens of millions, and must have caused pestilence instead of plenty among two millions of people. The palpable absurdity of a literal interpretation of the passage, understood in any sense of quails, has betrayed others into modes of evading the difficulty scarcely less absurd. The most curious is that originating with Josephus, who understood the phrase "two cubits high upon the face of the earth," to have reference to the height at which, in their exhausted state, they flew above the ground, so as to be within easy reach of the Israelites, viz. two cubits, or between three and four feet. From

attempts like these, we turn to the clear and easy *literal* interpretation of this text, supplied by the substitution, authorized by the foregoing Sinaïtic inscriptions, in the rendering of the Hebrew *salu*, for *quails*, of *red geese*. For the height of the casarca, or long-legged red goose, is stated by naturalists at three feet and a half, or precisely the Scriptural admeasurement of two cubits; and this *quæstio vexatissima*, thus literally understood, proves to have reference, neither to the depth at which the birds lay upon the ground, nor to the height at which they flew above it, but simply *to the stature of the stork-like red goose*, as described in the "Encyclopædia Britannica."

In corroboration of the light thus reflected from the rocks of Sinai upon this miracle, I would conclude this topic with, perhaps, the most striking illustration from natural history that a Scripture miracle has ever yet received. This, at least, it proves, if nothing more, that, of all feathered fowls, the *anas* tribe was that best suited, not only to supply the Israelites with abundant and curable food, but to offer themselves to their captors an easy and stupified prey. "The *berniclæ* (one of the many species of the *anas* or *anser*) is of a brown colour, with the head, neck, and breast black, and a white

collar. These birds, like the bernacles, frequent our coasts in winter, and are particularly plentiful, at times, on those of Holland and Ireland, where they are taken in nets, placed across the rivers. In some seasons, they have resorted to the coasts of Picardy, in France, in such prodigious flocks, as to prove a pest to the inhabitants; especially in the winter of the year 1740, when these birds destroyed all the corn near the sea-coasts, by tearing it up by the roots. *A general war* was, for this reason, declared against them, and carried on in earnest *by knocking them on the head with clubs; but their numbers were so prodigious, that this availed but little. Nor were the inhabitants relieved from this scourge, till the north wind, which had brought them, ceased to blow, when they took leave.*" *

It is only to transfer this scene to the coast of Sinai, and all the main circumstances of the Scripture miracle seem to rise before us.

* Encycl. Brit.

“THE ROCK IN HOREB:” OR THE MURMUR-
INGS AND MIRACLE AT MERIBAH.

(Exod. xvii. 1—7.)

In the outline of the well of Marah (now âin Howara), in Mr. Gray's inscription, No. 59., we have already seen that it was a practice of the authors of the Sinaitic inscriptions, occasionally at least, to draw the localities of the events of the Exode which they record. The rude fidelity of this outline is, further, some warrant for the belief that, if they meant similarly to design other localities or objects, their representations, however rude, would be correct as to the forms; enough so, at least, to give a just idea of them. This impression justified more attention to other rude outlines, apparently of rock or water, in the inscriptions of Gray and Beer, than otherwise they could have claimed. Among these was particularly noticeable an appearance of detached rock,

in Gray, No. 52. Whether so intended or not, its form might very well represent one of those shivered rocks, which travellers describe as lying scattered in the vallies of Mount Sinai. No inference, however, was drawn from this outline, until decyphering of the short and clear inscription seemed to identify it with the rock and miracle of Meribah. Another and shorter inscription (Gray, 50.), also accompanied by a sketch seemingly of rock or water, on decyphering, proved to relate to the same event. They are given, accordingly, together.

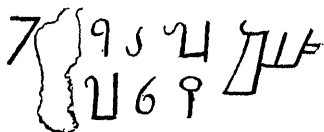
If there was design in the outline, there arises a fair presumption that, in this shivered pinnacle, we may have the true form of the rock of Meribah, an irregular cone. If so, it certainly is not the same with that near Mount St. Catharine, called "the stone of Moses," which is cubical, not conical; being described by Shaw as "about six yards square," and by Burckhardt, as "about twelve feet high, of an irregular shape, approaching to a cube." The claim of this rock seems disposed of by the remark of Burckhardt, that the Upper Sinai, in which it lies, abounds with springs, some of which are close to this stone. If the rock of Meribah be still in existence, it may yet possibly be identified by its form, from Gray, No. 52.

These notices of Meribah will now be corroborated by an inscription of clearer import, and a higher strain, recording, as read by the alphabet here used, the immediate sequel of that miracle.

No. VI.

GRAY, 52.

Loose Stone:
Apparently perfect.



רוי היר ע
אביג

The People the hard stone satiates with water*
thirsting.

No. VII.

GRAY, 50.

Loose Stone:
Fragment.



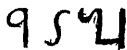
פעל מאה רוי

The hard rock water a great miracle.

* Num. xx. 7-13. Ps. lxxviii. 20. and cxiv. 8.



□, *ām*, Populus: plebs. "The People."

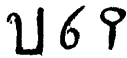


هیر, *īahīar*, Durus lapis: et absolute Saxum durum.
item, Copiosa aqua. A hard stone: also, Copious water.



روي (?) *rawī*, Explevit potu: pec. aquæ. Satiates with water.
Propinavit suis hausitque potu. Draws water.

(Drawing of rock at Meribah ?)



امج, *amaj*, Sitivit. Thirsting.



ردية, *radī*, Lapis, isque durus. Saxum: Petra.
"A hard stone. A rock."



ماء, *mah*, Aqua. "Water."



فعل, *fāl*, *maftāl*, Res magna ac mira.
A great and wonderful thing.

BATTLE OF REPHIDIM: FIGURE OF MOSES WITH UPLIFTED HANDS.

(Exod. xvii. 8—16.)

The significancy of the rude figures and outlines in the Sinaitic inscriptions, and their close connection with the sense, had been sufficiently established from Mr. Gray's collection, before I had seen that of Prof. Beer. When, accordingly, in his "Century," I opened upon an inscription upon the rock, "in a situation now inaccessible," which had been partially given only by Gray, containing, above, a single line in the unknown characters *, and a man standing over it with uplifted hands †, the whole inscribed in the outline of a great stone, I felt the probability stood high that the inscription contained a record of a corresponding event of the Exode. The attitude of

* The barbarous Greek scrawled underneath this line, is so obviously a superfetation, as to be unworthy of note or comment. The Saracenic name *Oumapos*, *Omar*, is an exception, because it indicates a *post-Mahometan* date for these superadditions.

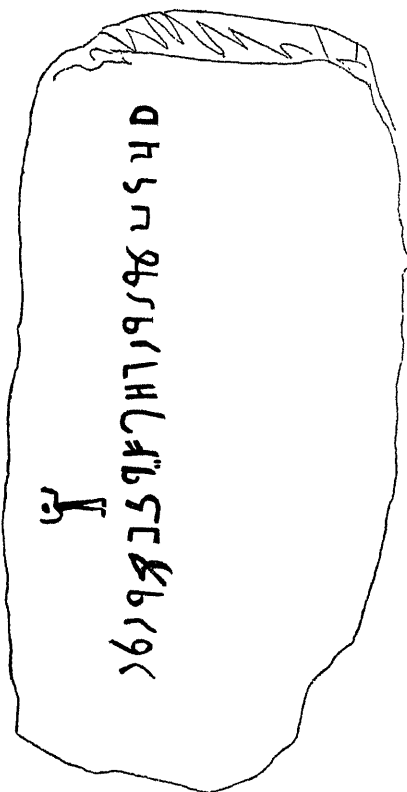
† This pre-eminently *Mosaic* symbol is a commonplace at Sinai: "*Homines* — manus ad cœlum tollentes." — *Beer*, Introd. p. xii. What a corroboration of the other proofs of designed allusion, here, to Moses at Rephidim!

the figure pointed towards one event ; but the inference was to be drawn, not from the figure, but from the decyphering. The inscription was decyphered by the alphabet previously constructed from experiments ; and proved to be the record of the battle of Rephidim, with the figure of Moses with uplifted hands,* and the names of Aaron and Hur, his supporters, with mention of the stone, and apparently the delineation of its form.

* The Sinaïtic inscriptions once proved of Israelitish origin, it is obvious that any pictorial representations found among them, agreeing with great events of the Exode, acquire an authority as designed agreements, which otherwise they could not possess. They become, in fact, aids and corroborations of decyphering, whenever they are accompanied by inscriptions.

No. VIII.

BEER, 108. B.



דעא
 חמר יתיריד וזי
 הוון
 הר
 אלא

Prayeth unto God the prophet [upon] a hard great stone [his] hands sustaining Aaron Hur.

٩٤٥ دعا, *dāa*, Invocavit, rogavit *Deum*. Convocavit *ad Deum propheta*.
Invokes, supplicates, *God*. Calls to *God the prophet*.

٩٦٥ حمارة, *Petra magna*. "A great stone."

٩٧ ير, *ir*, *Naturā durus lævisque lapis seu petra*.
يرا, "Hard and smooth (*a stone*)."

٦٧ يد, *id*, *Manus*. The hand : hands.

H (٢) وزي, *wazi*, i. q. لستد, *Inniti fecit, fulsit, dorsum suum*.
Causing to lean, propping, *the back*.

٣٥٩٠٤٧ هرون, *harun*, Aaron.

٩٨ هر, *hur*, Hur.

١٦١ اما, *ama*, *Quidem, quā, immo, quinimmo*.
Truly, indeed, certainly, verily.

: MIRACLE AT THE ROCK OF MERIBAH
KADESH.

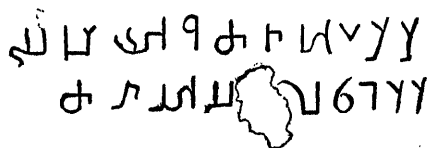
Two great events of the Exode, the miraculous supplies of water from the rocks of Meribah, and of Meribah Kadesh, although separated by a space of forty years, are so identified with each other by their common name, and by the corresponding nature of the miracles, that they come naturally under the same head. The occurrence in the neighbourhood of Mount Sinai, of a prominent record of the one, if it did not raise, at least countenanced, the hope, that there might exist, also, some similar record of the other. It was not, however, with any such anticipation that I entered on the decyphrement of the two-line inscription, of which the original and its interpretation are submitted in the next two pages. It was resolved into words, and its characters read, upon the principles already established by a long train of experiments, some results of which are before the reader in preceding pages. The words نسي *nasi*, *Striking with a stick*, صخر,

sachar, The great rock, سح, mid, Flows the water, هوي, hawī, Falling from above, following in immediate succession, pointed, indeed, significantly towards one or other of those miracles; but were, at first, identified with that of Meribah.

The remaining words of the inscription, however, so differed from the circumstances of that event, and so harmonized with those of the miracle at Meribah Kadesh, in the last year of the Exode, as to place it, to my conviction, beyond doubt, that this was the event here commemorated. Without further remark, I leave the document, with its scriptural illustrations, to the judgment of the reader.

No. IX.

GRAY, 27, 1.



وعوع نسي صخر سعب هوي
وعوع دمع اصل صمخ

The eloquent speaker* strikes the rock flows forth the water falling down

The eloquent speaker* bowing the head takes his rod in his hand† resounds the struck rock.

* "And the Lord spake unto Moses, saying, *Take thy rod*, and gather thou the assembly together, thou and Aaron thy brother, *and speak ye unto the rock* before their eyes; and it shall give forth his water; and thou shalt bring forth to them water out of the rock: so thou shalt give the congregation and their beasts drink. And Moses took the rod from before the Lord, as he commanded him. And Moses and Aaron gathered the congregation together before the rock, *and he said unto them*, Hear now ye rebels; must we fetch you water out of this rock? *And Moses lifted up his hand, and with his rod he smote the rock twice*; and the water came out abundantly: and the congregation drank, and their beasts also." — Num. xx. 7—13.

"And Moses was mighty *in words* and in deeds." — Acts, vii. 22.

† "And thou shalt take this rod in thine hand." — Exod. iv. 17.

"And Moses made haste, *and bowed his head towards the earth*." — Exod. xxxiv. 8.

yy

وعوع, *wāwā*, Eloquent ac disertus orator.
The eloquent and skilful orator.

lv

نسي, *nasī*, Percussit. منسة, *minsāt*, Baculus: scipio.
Strikes. A stick: a staff.

٩ح

صخبر, *sachar*, Ingens saxum. Petra: scopulus.
A great stone. A rock.

٢٥

سعب, *sāaba*, Fluxit aqua. Flows the water.

لل

هوي, *hwī*, Decidit, delapsus fuit ex alto.
Falling, descending from a height.

yy

وعوع, *wāwā*, Eloquent ac disertus orator.
The eloquent and skilful orator.

٦٧

دمح, *damaha*, Inclinauit caput eoque demisso fuit.
Bending the head and keeping it bowed down.

لم

عصل, *āsala*, Prehendit manu baculum suum.
He takes his staff in his hand.

ح

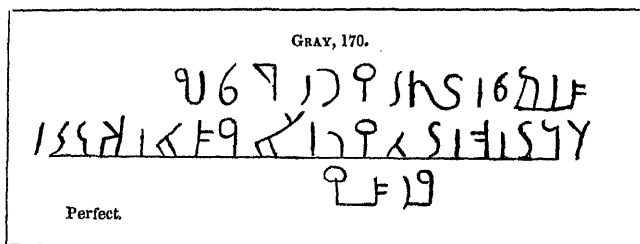
صخ, *sak*, Sonus petrae: pec. percussæ.
Sonus ex lapidis in petram illusione.
Rei duræ in solidam illisio.
The sound of a rock: peculiarly when struck.

But where the miracles of Moses are so repeatedly chronicled in these inscriptions, and his scriptural character so justly preserved in this last, as "a man mighty *in word* and *in deed*," it might seem not unreasonable to expect some mention of him by name. It was not, however, under the influence of any such previous impression, but simply in the prosecution of experimental analysis of the inscriptions, that I discovered in Gray, No. 170., and in Beer, No. 27., two clear occurrences of the proper name, *Mousi* or *Moses*: I say clear occurrences, because the characters of the name are clear*, and the contexts of the two inscriptions harmonize most happily with its introduction; each supplying, in a leading point of the life of Moses, the *dignus vindice nodus*. Here again, without further remark, I submit the two records.

* In the second of the two inscriptions, p. 128, the similarity between the *m* and *s*, is not more than that which subsists between the corresponding Arabic characters, *م* and *س*, which are often confounded. Generally speaking, there is about the same liability to confusion of letters at Sinai, as in the Hebrew similars. This must always be attended to and allowed for.

INSCRIPTIONS RECORDING THE MIRACLE AT THE
ROCK OF MERIBAH KADESH.

No. X.



عم موسي اح
 عدير اشعر عم
 عيج

رسيح
 روط
 اوي

The People Moses provoketh to anger kicking like an ass.
 [At] the water-springs wanton the people railleth against Jehovah
 crying out.

𐤀𐤋𐤍

𐤀𐤋𐤍, *ām*, Populus: plebs. "The People."

𐤌𐤍𐤏𐤓𐤁

𐤌𐤍𐤏𐤓𐤁, *mousi*, Moses.

𐤀𐤇

𐤀𐤇, *ah*, Irasci, ægre ferre, indignari.
To be angry, to be vexed, to be indignant.

𐤓𐤁𐤍

𐤓𐤁𐤍, *ramah*, Calcitravit asinus, mulus, equus.
Kicketh the ass, the mule, the horse.

𐤀𐤀𐤓𐤓𐤁

𐤀𐤀𐤓𐤓𐤁, *ādīra*, Aquā abundavit locus.
A locality abounding with water.

𐤀𐤏𐤓𐤁𐤍

𐤀𐤏𐤓𐤁𐤍, *ashur*, Protervus. Wanton.

𐤀𐤋𐤍

𐤀𐤋𐤍, *ām*, Populus. "The People."

𐤓𐤁𐤍𐤏𐤓𐤁

𐤓𐤁𐤍𐤏𐤓𐤁, *ramata*, Probro affecit. Ralleth at.

𐤀𐤓𐤁

𐤀𐤓𐤁, *Iao*, Jehovah. 𐤀𐤓𐤁, 𐤀𐤓𐤁, *Res exstans, Persona, hypostasis.*
A Being: an Existence, a hypostasis.

𐤀𐤓𐤁𐤍

𐤀𐤓𐤁𐤍, *āja*, Clamavit. Clamouring, clamorous.

אדם

אדם, *âdām*, Populus. "The People."

בטור

בטור, *Brutum*. "A brute animal."
בעיזר, *badîr*, Asinus. "An ass."

זר

זר, *warā*, *Repletus fuit cibo*.
"Replete with food."

מזר

מזר, *mîzar*, *Mordax asinus*. A biting (ass).

מים

מים, *mîm*, *Aquæ*. "The waters."

משה

משה, *mîsî*, Moses.

זר

זר, *warî*, *Avertit, ab eo visum*.
Turneth away his face from him.

יח

יח, *Yao*, *Jehovah*. "Res extans, hypostasis,
Persona.
Being: Existence: Per-
sonality."
"Hypostasis, a term used
in the doctrine of the
Trinity."—Johnson.

THE PLAGUE OF FIERY SERPENTS.

Amidst so many records of the Mosaic miracles of mercy, is it probable that the miracles of judgment should be altogether overlooked? This is a question which may be fairly asked; and it can be answered satisfactorily. For the last great miracle of the Exode, on the Arabian side of Jordan, the plague of the fiery serpents, as will now be shown, is represented pictorially upon the rocks of Sinai, accompanied by an inscription in four lines, which I will venture to say beforehand contains every element of proof that could be demanded or desired, for the purposes of clear and conclusive decyphering. For these purposes, the first of all requisites unquestionably is, the coexistence, in the same monument, of pictures of animals or other objects, with their names, noun substantives, in written characters beside them. This requisite, I am prepared to show, is found, not once only, but several times, in the inscription to which we will now come. Another desideratum of scarcely less prominence, and of nearly equal conclusiveness, is the occurrence, in any inscription of this

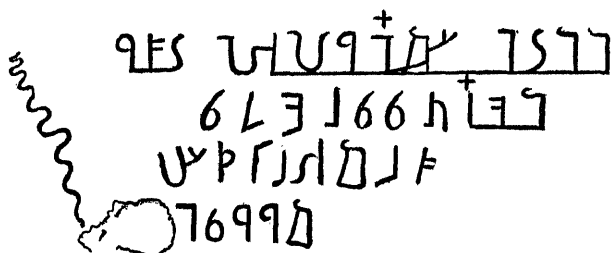
nature, of a series of words, which, in the process of decyphering, consistently and consecutively tell the *known* story of the picture. Where these two requisites are found united, the nature of the proof, if arrived at by experiment, is self-evidently as complete, not only as can be desired, but as can be conceived.

Now I am prepared to show that all the three requisites are to be found in the pictorial inscription about to be submitted. For, 1. we have, here, the picture of a serpent, in the act of descending upon a prostrate victim from above; the curling folds of the reptile running down the whole length of the inscription, as though to mark out to the eye its connection with it. 2. We have the name serpent twice, and in two different words. And 3. we have a full description of the action represented by the falling serpent, and of the mode in which the creature, as described by all naturalists, entangles, and masters his prey.

Having thus called the attention of the reader to the main points of its contents, I leave this record of the last judicial miracle of the Exode to answer for itself.

No. XII.

GRAY, 83.



Rock: apparently perfect. Besides the serpent there are two little figures standing on the letters marked +, and a camel before the last line but one.

یر	صد	درة	عم	بید
نام	منعی	سم	قر	
عاج	سلفی	عم		
مر	رمد			

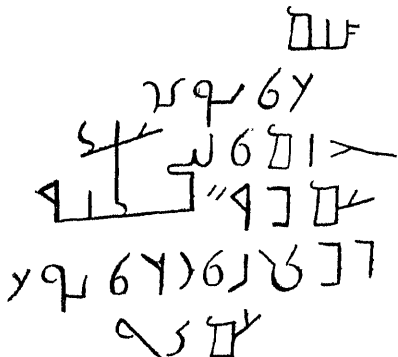
Destroy springing on the People the fiery serpents.
 Hissing injecting venom heralds of death they kill
 The People prostrating on their back curling in folds
 They wind round descending on bearing destruction.

* 157	ביד, <i>bid</i> , Perdidit, exitio dedit. Destroys, gives to destruction.
עם	עם, <i>am</i> , "Vulgus hominum, plebs : Populus. The People."
* 796	דרה, <i>darah</i> , Impetum fecit, irruit, supervenit. Rushing down upon from above.
אס	סדא, <i>sadā</i> , Serpens. "The serpent."
עש	ער, <i>ir</i> , Ignis. Caluit, feruit. Fire. Fiery.
קס	קר, <i>kar</i> , Sibilavit <i>serpens</i> . Hissing (<i>a serpent</i>).
סח	סם, <i>sam</i> , Veneno sustulit, læstive, infect. Infecting, destroying, with poison.
סס	סנעי, <i>mandi</i> , Nuncius mortis. Messenger of death.
סל	נמ, <i>nwm</i> , Interemit. Kills.
סס	עם, <i>am</i> , Plebs : Populus. "The People."
ססס	סלס, <i>salak</i> , Conjecit, stravitte <i>cum</i> in dorso. Prostrating <i>any one</i> on his back.
ס	עא, <i>auj</i> , Serpens. "The serpent."
סס	מר, <i>mar</i> , Luctatus fuit, se obvolvīt, implicuit <i>alteri</i> : ut humi sterneret <i>cum</i> . Winding round to prostrate <i>any one</i> .
769	רמ, <i>ramad</i> , Supervenit <i>ils</i> : <i>pecul.</i> exitium inferens Coming down upon : <i>pec.</i> bearing destruction.

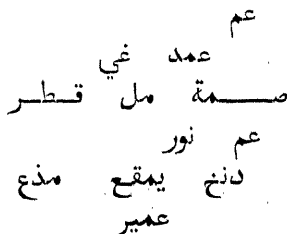
* The *daleth* of this inscription is peculiarly worthy of notice. In the examples marked with asterisks, it is precisely the present Hebrew ך.

No. XIII.

GRAY, No. 55.



Loose stone: uncertain. Observe the union of 7 letters.



The People


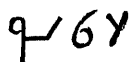

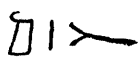

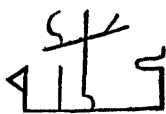


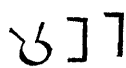
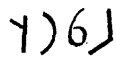
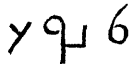
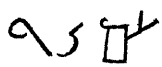
sustain on a pole erecting a standard *
the male serpent fiery of molten brass.

The people look towards the fire
bowing themselves down sought by an evil thing offer up vows
the tribes (the Hebrews).

* The serpent upon a cross was an Egyptian standard. It occurs repeatedly upon the grand staircase of the temple of Osiris at Philoe. But an example, curiously illustrative of "the brazen serpent," is that given by Col. Howard Vyse, "Pyramids of Gizeh," vol. i. p. 63; where the kneeling figures are in the act of erecting the cross standard, with the serpent upon it.

The crux ansata is another form, only with the serpent in coil. It is very remarkable that two examples of it occur in my Frontispiece. One, apart from letters. Can this represent the standard of the "brazen serpent?"



- 
 ١١١, *am*, Populus: plebs. "The People."
- 
 ٦٥٧, *Sustinuit, fulsit.* Sustaining, propping.
 ١١١, *amad*, Re altiore, columnā, palo, sustinuit, fulsit.
 Sustaining, propping, with a high thing, a column, a pole.
- 
 ١١١, *ghi*, Erexit vexillum. Erecting a standard.
- 
 ١١١, *sāmat*, Serpens mas. A male serpent.
- 
 ١١١, *mala*, Pruna ignis. Calor febrilis in osse.
 A live coal of fire. Feverish burning in the bones.
- 
 ١١١, *katara*, Æs fusile. Molten brass.
- 
 ١١١, *am*, Populus. The People.
- 
 ١١١, *nwr*, *Conspexit ignem.* Beholding the fire.
- 
 ١١١, *danacha*, Humillavit, demisitque se, et caput suum.
 Humbling himself, bowing down the head.
- 
 ١١١, *maká*, Petitus fuit re aliquā malā.
 Pursued by some evil thing.
- 
 ١١١, *madzá*, Dedit, præstititve *jusjurandum.*
 Taking, or tendering, an oath, a vow.
- 
 ١١١, *āmīr, āmrāt*, Tribus. A tribe: pl. The Tribes.
 ١١١, *āmarun*. "The Hebrews."

Much learned research has been devoted by commentators to the question, as to the particular species of serpent employed in this judicial miracle. The allusions in Isaiah to "the fiery flying serpent," have been not unnaturally understood as having reference to this plague. And Bochart and others, taking the words of the Prophet literally, have collected authorities for the existence, in Egypt and other parts, of serpents with wings: especially a kind called the *saraph*. By D. Calmet, however, the properties of the Akousias or Jaculus, a serpent of such muscular power and velocity that it seems to fly, are thought to answer sufficiently, both to the Prophet's description, and to the circumstances of the miracle at Kadesh Barnea. The Sinaitic inscriptions now, at length, come in to reflect their light upon the point at issue. And, if they be admitted as authority, "the fiery serpents" of the Exode were destitute of wings. At least, no representation of a winged serpent has been found upon the rocks of Sinai; and the specimen in Gray, No. 83., is evidently that of a snake of the jaculus kind, springing or flying in virtue of its great muscular power. Happily I am enabled, now, to produce recent authority, in proof that this representation contains the truth of the case, as

respects the last great miracle of judgment upon Israel in the wilderness. The Journal of the late Captain Frazer, to which the reader is already indebted, contains a passage which, at once, throws light upon the Mosaic miracle, and establishes the authority, as an illustration of it, of the representation of the fiery serpent. "Ras Wady Rasale. At 3 h. 28 m., a little excitement was got up among the caravan, by the appearance of a *hannish* or snake in our path, of the adder species.* He was soon killed. This interested me, *as it was in the country we were approaching that the Israelites were bitten by serpents.* Twellop (his Shiekh) and all the Arabs declare, *that there is a serpent that flies, called 'Hannish Tahyar,' Flying snake, and that they are numerous in the mountains here, during the hot weather.* They are about three feet long, *and are very venomous, the bite being deadly.* The only way of catching them is to shoot them, or throw a cloak over them. They come *sometimes* into the valleys. Mohammed Ali told me that he had *seen them* in the Hedjaz, *skimming the ground like flying fish.* They have no wings, but make great springs. Twellop confirms this. They have very small heads, and are of the colour of

* "The viper, and fiery flying serpent." *Isaiah xxx. 6.*

the ground." (*MS. Journ.*) Let the fact, and the description, be compared with the serpent delineated in Gray, No. 83., and it may be left to the reader to draw his own conclusion.

INSCRIPTIONS REPRESENTING ISRAEL UNDER THE IMAGE OF AN ASS, OR WILD ASS.

The constant recurrence, both of the word *ramah* (or the ass kicketh), and of the figure of this animal upon the rocks of Sinai, will fairly justify an expectation that the name, or names, for the ass, or the wild ass, noun-substantives, would be found in other inscriptions. The expectation will not be disappointed. Mention of this animal, as the symbol of rebellious Israel, is introduced again and again, under one or other of his many Arabic names; as *حمر*,

GLOSSARY OF PLATE VI.

يهشع	م	The People petulant.
حمر	م	the people a wild ass. *
	دقوق	trampling.

Israel as a tortoise, *وخواخ* *wakwak*, "slow, slothful."

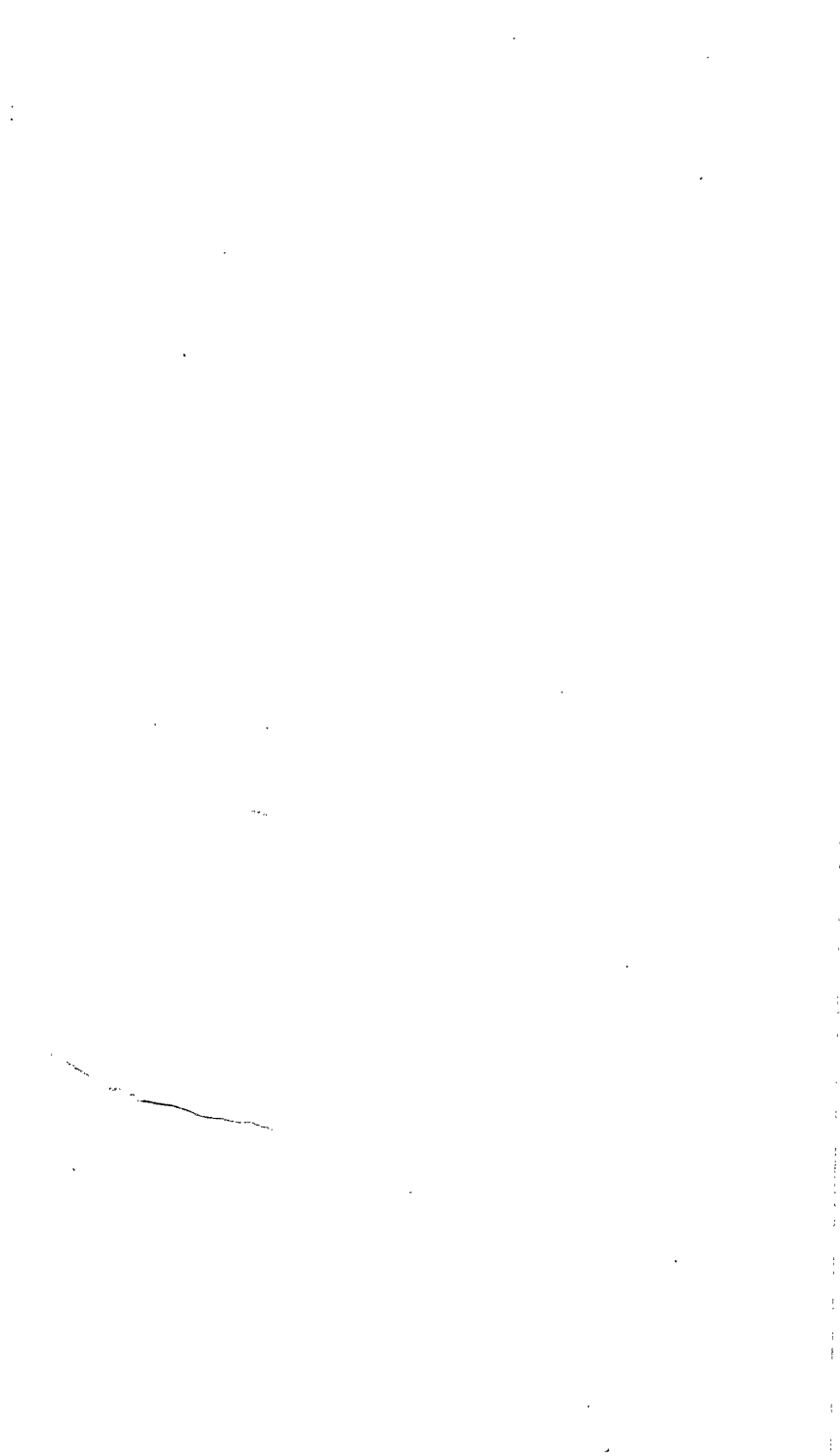
* For the device corresponding with this legend, see Frontispiece.

16-9 8-11
 98 26 11
 53



ROCK PROJECTING FROM FACE OF A PRECIPICE IN A RAVINE
 NEAR SWARFET-EL-KHADIM. D.B. 1843.

Day & Son, Lith^{rs} to the Queen.



No. XIV.

BERR,
89.

C. 72.

*
 35 5 8 11 9 8 2 6 11
 , 6 ,

يـعـمـد

عـم

حـمـر

عـم

The People a wild ass. The People wandereth to and fro.

No. XV.

* 90.

N.

8 8 9 11 11
 9 8 2 6 11

يـعـمـد

عـم

حـمـر

عـم

The People wandereth to and fro.
the people a wild ass.

No. XVI.

* 88.

C. 75.

3 6 9 9 11
 9 8 2 6 11

يـعـمـد

عـم

حـمـر

عـم

The People wandereth to and fro
the people a wild ass.* The two forms of the *m* are to be seen demonstratively in these identical inscriptions.

hamar, حمر, *marn*, مارا, *fara*, فاعير, *bâair*, باير, *âir*, &c. As this cumulative evidence is of great force and importance, both as illustrating the term *ramah*, and as authenticating the powers of so many characters of the Sinaitic alphabet, I shall now lay before the reader some of the principal inscriptions in which this emblem of Israel is found, under one or other of the above names.

Among these inscriptions, the three which immediately precede are peculiarly valuable; because they present three occurrences of the word حمر or حمار, *himar* or *humr*, an ass or he-ass, in the same characters, characters of known forms; and because they present, also, three double occurrences of the initial word, عم, The People, written, alternately, with the initial *ain* ornamented with side-strokes, and with the simple and acknowledged Hebrew *ain*. The amount of this evidence is self-evident; it is that of a "three-fold cord." The shortness and simplicity of the inscriptions renders a glossary needless.

INSCRIPTIONS REPRESENTING ISRAEL UNDER
THE IMAGE OF A RESTIVE CAMEL.

The prophetic Scriptures, we have seen, represent rebellious Israel under the double image of "a wild ass used to the wilderness," and of "a swift dromedary traversing her ways." And under the same two-fold imagery we find her depicted upon the rocks of Sinai. The symbol of the camel, of frequent occurrence upon these rocks, is happily preserved in two pictorial inscriptions, of striking interest to the eye, and, as we will proceed now to show, of great importance to the evidences.

The first of these inscriptions represents a restive young dromedary, led by a conductor, and in the very action described by Jeremiah, crossing from side to side, or "traversing her ways." The second depicts an obstinate full-grown camel, just broke loose from his guide, the mouth open, the look sullen, as though riveted to the ground on which he stands.

The human figure in both pictures is evidently that of "one in authority," for he bears in the right hand a wand or sceptre terminating in a triangle, an emblem of highest import which might suggest and justify the thought, that he

* See the *same figure*, leading an ass, and a horse, in Frontispiece.

who bears it may be no other than He who appeared unto Joshua "with his sword drawn in his hand," and announced himself "as Captain of the Lord's host." *

The legend of each inscription corresponds with its device. It appears to symbolize "the Angel of the Covenant," who, alternately, controls and casts off his disobedient People. "The People of the Hebrews restrains with the rein Jehovah," are the words of the first inscription; and the action agrees with the words, for the human figure is moving on, and compels the young camel to follow. "The People of the Hebrews casts off Jehovah," is the awful wording of the second; and the action here also is in keeping, for the rein is thrown up, and the human figure, looking backwards, as though reproachfully, stands still. The attitude of the camel was at once recognized by a traveller in those parts, who observed on it, "That camel is a roarer. Once a camel puts himself into that attitude, nothing can move him. He is abandoned to die where he stands." What a picture of rebellious Israel, when her iniquity had come to the height, and her day of grace was past!

But the subject of these two inscriptions is not more important in itself, than their opening

* Josh. v. 14.

words are important to the evidences. The expression *âm âmir*, or *âm âmran*, "The People of the Tribes," or "The People of the Hebrews," which first presents itself to us in these inscriptions, is a statement, in so many words, of their Israelitish origin. The phrase occurs no less than twelve times in the inscriptions already copied; and, of course, is one of continual recurrence. I had read it, "The People of the Tribes," for several years; and had justly regarded it in this sense, as evidence of the highest value. But it is only very recently that I discovered incidentally in Richardson (what seems to have escaped the other lexicographers) that the plural *عمران*, *âmran*, signifies, also, "The Hebrews:—" apparently as being synonymous with the denomination "Tribes." Either sense would be decisive for the Israelitish origin of the inscriptions; but both, united, seem to proclaim it trumpet-tongued. I would add only, in this connection, that the word *عمران*, *âmran*, "The Hebrews," itself, occurs in Mr. Gray's Sinaitic inscription, No. 119; and in connection, too, with Israel under the same image of a camel: "The People a herd of camels feeds in the desert wantonly."

* "عمران, *âmran*, The Hebrews."

No. XVII.

GRAY, No. 15.

9 5 9 6 7
 9 1 2 3 4 5 6 7

عم مرن روي
 عم فورا

The People a wild ass replete with water
 The People a silvan ass.

No. XVIII.

GRAY, No. 40

Rock : Perfect.

5 6 7 8 9
 9 1 2 3 4 5 6 7 8 9

عـصـدي
 رعرع فرا

Bending the neck
 He breaks in the wild ass.

No. XIX.

GRAY, No. 133.

Perfect.

9 1 2 3 4 5 6 7 8 9

عم مر جرع عسير

The People at Marah drinketh like a wild ass.

عَم, لا, *ām*, Populus. "The People."

مَرْن, ? *marn*, Onager. A wild ass.

رَوِي, ? *rawī*, Potavit, explevit potu, *pec. aquæ*.
Drinking, drinking to repletion, *especially* water.

عَم, لا, *ām*, Populus. "The People."

فَرَا, *fara*, Onager, *Asinus silvester*. A wild ass ; a silvan ass.

عَصَد, *āsad*, l. q. أَوَا, *Inflexit, torsit, collum*.
Bending, twisting, *the neck*.

رَاعَرَع, *rārā*, Exercuit inequitando indomitum *jumentum*.
Exercising by riding an unbroken *beast of burthen*.

فَرَا, *fara*, Onager, *asinus silvaticus*. A wild ass.

عَم, لا, *ām*, Populus. "The People."

مَرَر, *murrah*, Marah.

جَرَع, *jarā*, Sorpsit hausitque *aquam*.
Absorbing, gulping down, *water*.

عَمِير, *āyyr*, *Asinus, cum domesticus, tum sylvester*.
An ass, *both* tame, *and* wild.

No. XX.

GRAY, No. 53.

⊙ 7. Y ⌈ 𐀓

Beside this were rudely cut two figures with sticks or swords: one in defence, and the other aiming a blow.

عم عدا دد

The People fight with each other in play.



From Wilkinson's Egypt, 1st series, No. 311.

It is the Egyptian game of single stick.

No. XXI.

GRAY, No. 14.

1 5 1 9 3 7 9 𐀓 𐀓 𐀓

Rock: perfect. A man riding on a loaded camel is rudely cut with the same instrument at the side of this.

عم درواس عرد قرقر اوي

The People a great docile camel cheers it with conductor's voice Jehovah.

עַם, *ām*, Populus. "The People."

אִדָּא, *āda*, Invicem infesti fuerunt et inimici.
Mutually encountering as enemies.

דָּד*, *dada*, Lusit. Lusit, et re ludicra tempus sefellit.
Play. They play, and playfully beguile the time.
"The people rose up to play."—*Exod.* xxxii. 6.; *1 Cor.* x. 7.

Munster alone of the commentators has hit the true sense of this text.

"*ad choreas, cantilenas, et ad a-*
case." Et respondit, *Non est vox fortium praeliantium*
Et verbum etiam Chaldaicum ܕܕܕܕ, ridere, joci:
Exod. xxxii. 6.

עַם, *ām*, Populus. "The People."

دِرواس, *diruas*, Magni cameli. Camelus talis submissus et obsequens.
Great camels. A camel pliant and yielding on his pasterns. (So
ap. Sil. Ital. Cerberus ore submisso obsequens) (دِروص)
Camel. velox.)

دُرْدَاد, *ārdad*, Durus, fortis. Firm, strong.

قَرَقَر, *?karkara*, Modulando canoram vocem suam *cantans camelorum ductor*.
Sings with melodious voice *modulating the camel driver*.

اَوِي, *Iao*, Jehovah. Res extans. Persona: Hypostasis.
A Being: Personality: Hypostasis.

* The large D intended to mark the double *dd*, or דָּד, דָּד?

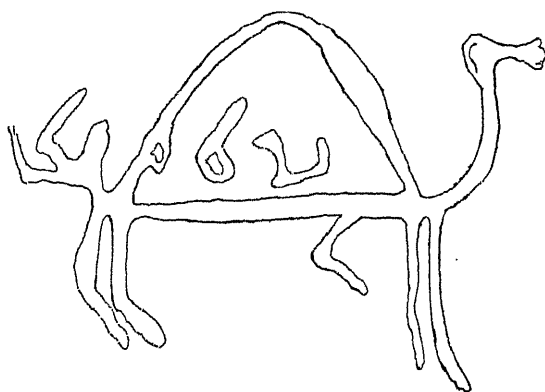
But the decyphering of the short, and self-interpretative inscription at the head of the preceding page, involves evidence beyond it of the very highest importance. It has been already proved, by comparison of all the forms of its first character, that the grand initial key-word of the Sinaïtic inscriptions, by Beer converted into *saalem* "Peace," is no other than the Scriptural term, עַם, *âm*, "The People." The proof is doubled by the inscription now in question. For this inscription commences with the initial word which characterizes these monuments; and the word is here illustrated by *two figures of men*. The device, most clearly, is an exposition of the legend. And the figures of *men* represent, as no other symbol could represent, "God's People Israel." Were Professor Beer's rendering correct, and the initial word *saalem*, *peace*, it would be rather a singular way of keeping the peace, for the men are *fighting*! It is the peace of which the Psalmist speaks, "When I speak unto them of peace, they make them ready to battle."

The importance of this key-word, which, whatever might be its sense, tells self-evidently, from its position and incessant recurrence, upon the whole of these inscriptions, and must be the true key to their interpretation, — will justify the introduction, here, of one more elucidation.

Among the pictorial inscriptions from Sinai,

two have been given, each having for its device the figure of a camel, led by a conductor. Both commence, alike, with the initial word, which Beer renders *peace*, and the present writer, *the people*; conformably with our very different readings of the first character. Now happily there occurs a third example of *the camel*, with the initial word in dispute written upon its body; and in this instance, the initial character appears, not with side-strokes, but in its simple form, which is no other than that of the Hebrew letter *ו*, *dîn*, as the reader shall be left to judge.

No. XXII.



With this final illustration, I leave in the hands of my readers the word, which, all authorities are agreed, can alone determine the origin, and guide the interpretation, of the written rocks of Sinai.

No. XXIII.

GRAY, No. 67.

עלם 69 קצב
אזר 79 נצב

Loose stone: perfect. Beside it a goat.

עם רמח
ובר נצב

The People kicketh like an ass
Like a goat they stand erect.

No. XXIV.

GRAY, No. 110.

עלם 9751
15195071

עם יער
יסמיר אוי

The People mutters like a goat
Reasons with them in the night Jehovah.

No. XXV.

עלם 9751
15195071

עם יער
יאיא עמיר אוי

The People mutters like a goat
Calls the Tribes to him Jehovah.

עַם, אָם, *âm*, Populus. "The People."

רָמַחַ, *ramah*, Calcitravit *asinus*. "The *ass* kicketh."

וּבָרַ, *wabar*, Pili caprini. Goats' hair. Pilosus (*camelus*, *caper*).

נָסַב, *nāsab*, In pedes surrexit. Erectum constituit.*
Rising up on the legs. Standing erect.

* (Q. the goat in the attitude described ?)

עַם, אָם, *âm*, Populus. "The People."

יָעַר, *iār*, Fremuit sive mutivit *capra*. Bleating, muttering (*a goat*).

סָמַר, *samar*, Noctu sermones habuit *cum aliquo*.
Holding converse *with any one* by night.

יְהוָה, *Iao*, Jehovah. Res extans: Persona: Hypostasis.
A Being: Personality: a Hypostasis.

עַם, אָם, *âm*, Populus. "The People."

יָעַר, *iār*, Fremuit sive mutivit *capra*. Bleats or mutters *the goat*.

יָאָה, *iaā*, Vocavit ad se *homines*. Calling *men* to him.

יְהוָה, *Iao*, Jehovah.

No. XXVI.

GRAY, No. 93.

Fragment on rocks. Over it a camel running away.

دادا نعب

Runs away the fleet she camel.

No. XXVII.

GRAY, No. 92.

Fragment on the rock. Beside it a camel.

بها نوخ وقر
عد

The gentle she camel kneeling down for her burthen prepares.

No. XXVIII.

GRAY, No. 144.

Fragment.

Before the last word, a beast of burthen loaded.

دادا دام مطية
عمير

Groan oppressed by their load a beast of burthen the Tribes.

دادا, *dada*, Vehementi cursu latus fuit *camelus*.
Runs at full speed a *camel*.

نعب, *nāba*, Velox *camela*. A fleet *she camel*.

بها, *bahu*, Camela mulgenti assueta, et mansueta.
A *she camel* accustomed to her milker, and gentle.

نوك, *nūk*, Camelus mulgens, vel mulgens *camel*.

وكر, *wikar*, Onus quod camelus portat. A *camel's* load.

عد, *ād*, Paravit, pręparavit, *camel*.
Preparing, *camel*.

دادا, *dada*, Resonantem ex imo pectore argutiorem sonum, qui حنين dicitur,
emisit *camelus*. A *camel* crying from its inmost chest.

نام, *ām*, Accumulata fuit *res rei*, eamve oppressit.
One thing heaped upon another, or oppressing it.

مطيط, *matit*, Jumentum, equus: quod impellitur trahiturve.

عمير, *amir*, Tribus. The Tribes. (The Hebrews.)

No. XXIX.

GRAY, No. 61.

151654H9557F
9839V'9E W6751Y

Rock high up (about 20 ft.): in a place where the winter torrent has undermined the slope. Perfect.

عم عمير زم غم اوي
عذم صعر حمار

The People of the tribes bridling restrains with the rein Jehovah
Biting twists round his neck the wild ass.

"Be ye not as the horse, or as the mule,
Which have no understanding;
Whose mouth must be held in with bit and bridle,
Lest they come near unto thee." Ps. xxxii. 9.

No. XXX.

GRAY, No. 177.

U96957F
151654H

عم رومح
عم هر اوي

The People kicketh like an ass
the people drives to the water Jehovah.

No. XXXI.

GRAY, No. 44.

U96957F
151654H

Loose stone: perfect and plain. Beside it a quadruped.

عم رومح
هشر

The People kicketh like an ass wantonly.

עַם, *âm*, Populus: plebs. "The People."

עֲמִיר, *âmir, âmiran*, "The Hebrews." "The great tribes."

זָמָה, *zama*, Ligavit, constrinxit: *pec. habenâ jumentum*.

גָּמָה, *gama*, Capistravit. Haltering.

אֵוִי, *Iao*, Jehovah. Res extans: Persona: Hypostasis.
A Being: Person: Hypostasis.

עֲדָמָה, *âdxama*, Dentibusprehendit, momordit, *equus*.
Seizing with his teeth, biting (*a horse*).

סָדָרָה, *sâira*, Obliquavit faciem suam.
Turning his face sideways.

חֲמָר, *hamar*, Asinus. An ass: *espec.* A he ass.

עַם, *âm*, Populus. "The People."

רָמָה, *ramah*, Calcitravit asinus. The ass kicketh.

עַם, *âm*, Populus. "The People."

הָרָה, *hara*, Propulsio: *pec. ad aquam*. "Driving: *especially* to the water."

אֵוִי, *Iao*, Jehovah. Res extans: Persona: Hypostasis.
A Being: a Person: a Hypostasis.

עַם, *âm*, Populus. "The People."

רָמָה, *ramah*, Calcitravit asinus. The ass kicketh. ["Beside it a quadruped."
— GRAY. Qu. This quadruped, also, a wild ass?]

הַשָּׁר, *hashar*, Lubentia insolens, petulantia,
Wanton glee, petulance.

No. XXXII.

BEER, 55.

1795 96 97 98 99
 100 101 102 103 104

105 106 107 108 109
 110 111 112 113 114

The People the water-spring seek greedily [at] Marah
 The People kicketh [like] a wild ass.

𐤄𐤍

𐤄𐤍, *dm*, Populus: plebs. "The People."

𐤁𐤁𐤓

𐤁𐤁𐤓, *ddira*, Aquâ abundavit locus. A watering-place.

𐤕𐤕

𐤕𐤕, *hid*, Aquam appetivêre, sliverunt, *cameli*.
Longing for water, thirsting, *camels*.

𐤌𐤓𐤁

𐤌𐤓𐤁, *Marah*.

𐤄𐤍

𐤄𐤍, *dm*, Populus: plebs. "The People."

𐤓𐤁𐤕

𐤓𐤁𐤕, *ramah*, Calcitravit *asinus*. "Kicketh as an ass."

𐤁𐤓

𐤁𐤓, *bari*, Agrestis, sylvaticus. Wild, sylvan.

𐤁𐤓

𐤁𐤓, *bair*, *Asinus*. "An ass." (*etiam*, *Camelus*.)

עַם עַם, עַם, am, Populus. "The People."

רָמָה רָמָה, ramā, Jecit, dejecit. Dicteriis impetivit. Imprecatus fuit.
Casting down. "Railing at, reproaching, imprecating."

וָקַע וָקַע, wakā, Obtrectavit, maledixit.
"Railing at, reproaching, cursing, execrating."

יָלַל יָלַל, julājil, Asinus claro rudens clangore.
"An ass braying loud and clear."

עָיָה עָיָה, aja, Clamavit: edidit sonum, vocemve.
"Clamorous, noisy, vociferous."

עַם עַם, am, Populus. "The People."

עָצַם עָצַם, ādzama, Dentibus prehendit, momordit, equus. &c.
Seizing with the teeth. "Biting (as a horse)."

בָּגַל בָּגַל, bagal, Mulus. "A mule." (Psalm xxxii. 9. conf.)

דָּמַר דָּמַר, damara, Audacter et impudenter irruit.
"Daringly and audaciously rushing in on any."

קִי קִי, kī, Valdè famelicus et carens omni cibo.
Famishing: totally destitute of food.

No. XXXV.

GRAY, No. 16.

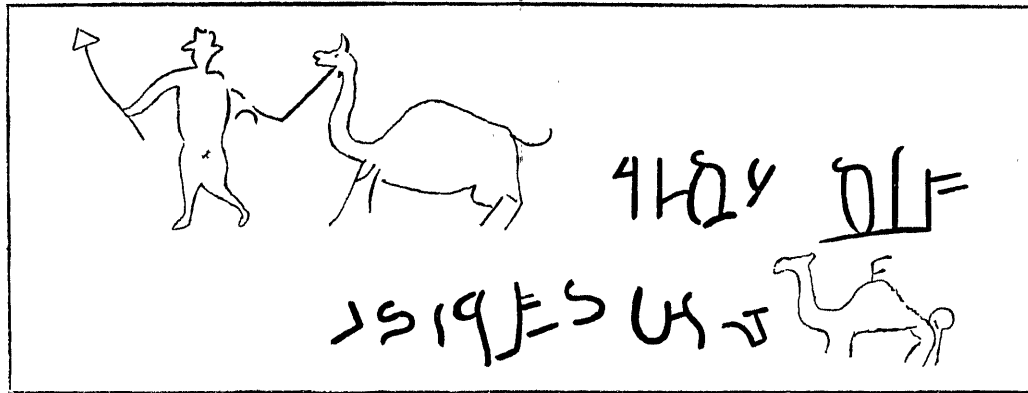
The People at Marah

bleateth like a goat kicketh like an ass
 at the basins of the two water-springs
 it drinks greedily with prone mouth.

No. XXXVI.

GRAY, No. 116.

The People at Marah.



עַמְּרָן
אֵלֶּה
אֵלֶּה

The People of the Hebrews
restrains with the rein tying it with a noose Jehovah.

עַמְּרָן

עַמְּרָן, am, Populus: plebs. "The People."

אֵלֶּה

עַמְּרָן, amran, "The Hebrews." עַמְּרָן, amiratan, Tribus magna, A great Tribe: pl. The Great Tribes; i. e. "The Tribes of the Lord."—Ps. cxxii. 4.

חָזַק

חָזַק, hazaka, Constrinxit fune. Restrains with a halter.

אֵלֶּה

אֵלֶּה, arī, Laqueo ligavit. Tying with a noose. (n. b. the camel's rein fastened with a noose.)

אֵלֶּה

אֵלֶּה, Iao, Jehovah. Res extans: Persona: Hypostasis. An Existence: Person: Hypostasis.



עַמְּרָן
אֵלֶּה
אֵלֶּה

The People of the Hebrews
biddeth begone Jehovah.

עַמְּרָן

עַמְּרָן, am, Populus: plebs. "The People."

אֵלֶּה

עַמְּרָן, amir, Tribus magna. The Great Tribes. עַמְּרָן, amran, "The Hebrews." עַמְּרָן, amru, Beer.)

אֵלֶּה

אֵלֶּה, hih, hih, Apage. Interfectio rejicientis et abigentis.

Begone. An interjection of rejection, a casting off.

אֵלֶּה

אֵלֶּה, Iao, Jehovah. Res extans: Persona: Hypostasis. An Existence: Person: Hypostasis.

عَم, *ām*, Populus. "The People." مَرَد, *marah*, (at) Marah.

نَب, *naba*,

رَمَح, *ramah*, Calcitravit asinus. Kicketh the ass.

جَا, *ja, jiat*, Receptaculum aquæ, locus quo confluit.
The basin of water, the place into which it flows.

عَدَر, *ādar*, Locus aquâ abundans. A place of water-springs.

كَرَعَ, * *kard*, Flexit se, incurvavit se genu.
Bowing oneself, bowing down on the knee.

* "Apud Arabes significationis primigeniæ vestigia tantum supersunt; *ut*, prone ore bibit, *pro* incurvavit se ad bibendum." — *Gesenius*.
Drinking with prone mouth, bowing down to drink.

"Os admovit *vel* immisit *aquæ*; eamque sorpsit seu potavit, non haurians manu aut vase." — *Colius*.

Putting the mouth into water and sucking it up, not drawing it with the hand, or with a vessel. (See *Judges*, vii. 6.)



BURCKHARDT.

1519 159F15199F961194B

ਪੰ ੮੧ ਜੁਲਾ

C. 67.

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علمی و ادبی

C. 61.

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BURCKHARDT.

ប្រធានមហាសន្និបាត

Rz. 29.

GRAY, 171.

GRAY, No. 10.

מאמר מוסמך
במחלקת
המסמכים

٩٤٩٦ ٧٩٦٥ ٨٨٨
١٦٨ ٢٦٩٦

161315 799675

GRAY, No. 173.

GRAY, No. 74.

፡ ገጽ ፻፲፱

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5 3 4 2 1
16 7 5 2 1

GRAY, No. 109.

GRAY, No. 6.

GRAY, No. 9.

የፌዴራል ሥልጣን

920y v f 5 6 7 1 > 8 10
C 1 > 1 > H

165 4'5 233

GRAY, No. 172.

GRAY, No. 154.

$244 + 2 \frac{1}{2}$
 151 244 2

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P152F11

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FINAL NOTES.

NOTE 1. p. 9.] “Præter hæc loca, inveniuntur tales inscriptiones, *cæque multæ*, in monte Serbal (Ssirbâl), qui propè ~~viarum~~ *illarum* australem situs est; necnon, sed rarius, in aliquot vallibus quæ a monte Sinai *australes* sunt.” — *Beer*, Introd. p. viii. Compare *Burckhardt*, *Travels*, p. 608. ss.; and *De Laborde*, *Voyage de l'Arabie Pétrée*, p. 64. s.

NOTE 2. p. 17.] The truth of the case (as will abundantly appear hereafter) is, that the modern Arabic alphabet contains not a few characters adopted obviously from those very Sinaitic, and other primitive inscriptions. The most important light yet thrown upon the history, and real antiquity, of this alphabet, will be found in the following letter of M. de Sacy : —

“*Lettre au Rédacteur du Journal Asiatique.*

“Monsieur,

“Vous désirez que je vous mette à même de faire connaître aux lecteurs du *Journal Asiatique* les résultats d'un Mémoire que j'ai lu dernièrement à l'Académie des Inscriptions et Belles-Lettres, sur quelques papyrus écrits en arabe, et découverts, il n'y a pas long-tems, en

Egypte. Comme je ne suis pas encore déterminé à publier ce Mémoire en particulier, et qu'il pourrait bien se passer dix ans avant qu'il parût dans la collection des Mémoires de l'Académie, je me rends volontiers à votre désir.

“ C'est à M. Drovetti, consul-général de France en Egypte, que je dois la communication de ces papyrus, qui ont été trouvés dans un pot de terre cuite, bien fermé, à la surface d'un tombeau; le tout enfoui dans le sable aux montagnes de Memphis, près des pyramides de Saccara, et au lieu même d'où été tiré le sarcophage de granit que l'on voit actuellement à Paris. Ces papyrus, de la grandeur d'une petite feuille de papier, sont au nombre de trois; chacun d'eux était roulé, et pour les lire, et en assurer la conservation, il a fallu les dérouler avec beaucoup de soin et les coller sur un carton léger, ce qui n'avait d'ailleurs aucun inconvénient, parce qu'ils n'étaient écrits que d'un côté. Deux seulement ont fixé mon attention; le troisième est dans un tel état de destruction, et l'écriture en est effacée en si grande partie, que je ne pense pas qu'on puisse en lire un seul mot. Dans les deux dont il va être question, il y a aussi des parties effacées, mais comme leur contenu est à peu de chose près le même, ils se prêtent un secours mutuel, et à l'exception de quelques mots, on les lit avec une parfaite certitude de ne pas se tromper. Ce sont deux passe-ports, dont le premier est donné à deux Egyptiens et le second à un seul. Je ne placerai ici que la traduction du premier, parce que c'est celui qui offre le moins de lacunes.

“ Au nom du Dieu clément et miséricordieux. Ceci est un écrit donné par moi, Djaber, fils d'Obeïd, intendant de l'Emir Abd-almélic, fils de Yézid, et préposé

au nome de Memphis, à *Samya felibec* سميّا فليبع imberbe, corpulent, roux, ayant le nez relevé en bosse, louche, incirconcis, et à *Feloudj Halbé* فلولج هلبه, imberbe, roux, louche, incirconcis, tous deux habitans du monastère d'Abou Hermès, du nome de Memphis, (attestant) que je leur ai permis de se transporter dans le Saïd avec leurs femmes, leurs provisions, et leurs marchandises, jusqu'à la fin de schawal de l'année 133. Si donc quelqu'un des intendans de l'émir (que Dieu lui accorde le bonheur!) les rencontre, il ne doit leur opposer aucun empêchement. Ecrit par Ibrahim, le 1^{er} jour de la lune de schawal, de l'an 133.'

" Au haut du papyrus, à la gauche du lecteur, on lit le mot فسحب, *il a été transcrit.*

" La partie inférieure du papyrus a été roulée et retenue par quelques filamens qu'on a repliés sur la partie roulée, et arrêtée par un cachet en argile, sur le quel on lit: *فوض حابر امره الى الرحمن الرحيم*, *Djaber a confié tous ses intérêts au (Dieu) clément et miséricordieux.*

" Le second papyrus est délivré par le même officier, et daté pareillement de schawal 133. L'objet en est le même, et le passe-port est donné comme le premier, à un habitant du monastère d'Abou Hermès, pour voyager dans le Saïd avec sa femme, ses provisions, et ses marchandises, jusqu'à la fin de schawal 133. Il est cacheté comme l'autre, et avec le même sceau. Il paraît écrit de la même main que le premier, quoique le nom de l'écrivain ait disparu.

" Ces deux papyrus semblent, sans doute, au premier coup-d'œil, de bien peu d'importance; mais pourtant, sous un certain rapport, ils sont du plus grand intérêt. En effet, ils sont écrits dans le caractère nommé *Neskhi*, dont on attribue généralement *l'invention* au célèbre vizir

Abou-Ali Ebn-Mocla, mort en l'année 326 de l'hégire, ou à son père Abou-Abd-Hasan, mort en 338; et comme leur date est certaine, on en doit conclure *que ce caractère existait deux siècles au moins avant Ebn-Mocla*. Je dis que leur date est certaine, et en effet l'authenticité de cette date est justifiée par l'histoire, qui nous apprend qu'en l'année 133, l'Égypte était gouvernée, comme on le lit sur ces passe-ports, par Abd-almélic, fils de Yézid. Voici à cet égard ce qu'on lit dans Makrizi.

“ ‘ Au commencement du mois de schaban 133, Abou-Aoun Abd-almélic, fils de Yézid, natif du Djordjan, fut nommé gouverneur de l'Égypte, et chargé en même-temps de l'intendance des finances, comme lieutenant de Salih, fils d'Ali.’ Ainsi, à la date de nos passe-ports, Abd-almélic, fils de Yézid, gouvernait l'Égypte depuis environ deux mois. Il en conserva le gouvernement, suivant Makrizi, jusqu'à la fin de l'an 135. Il est utile encore d'observer que l'époque de laquelle ces passe-ports sont datés, coïncide avec celle de la chute des Ommiades, et du commencement des Abbassides; que le dernier khalife Ommiade avait cherché un asile en Égypte, et que le changement de dynastie avait occasionné dans cette province des troubles et des hostilités. Il n'est pas surprenant que dans de telles circonstances, on ait soumis les chrétiens indigènes de l'Égypte à une surveillance qui peut-être n'aurait pas eu lieu dans des temps plus tranquilles.

“ L'écriture de notre papyrus offre encore quelques circonstances qui viennent à l'appui de leur haute antiquité. 1° *On n'y voit aucun point diacritique*, ce qui, pour le dire en passant, rend *très incertaine la lecture* et la prononciation des noms propres des Égyptiens aux-quels ces passe-ports ont été donnés; 2° on y remarque, comme sur les médailles anciennes coufiques,

l'omission de *l'elif* de prolongation, dans certaines mots : ainsi on y lit *كس* pour *كتاب* ; *احلب* pour *احلاب* ; *بللس* et *لب* pour *بلاب* et *لباس*.

“ Ces papyrus sont donc les plus anciens monumens connus de l'écriture *Neskhhi*, et même, si on excepte les médailles, *de l'écriture Arabe en général* ; du moins sont ils les seuls monumens antiques de cette écriture qui aient une date certaine. J'oubliais de dire que le cachet est en caractères coufiques.

“ Je me suis étendu à cette occasion, dans le Mémoire dont je vous offre ici, Monsieur, une très-courte analyse, sur l'histoire de l'écriture chez les Arabes, et les prolégomènes historiques d'Ebn-khaldoun m'ont fourni certaines particularités, desquelles j'ai cru pouvoir conclure, avec quelque vraisemblance, que le caractère *Neskhhi* existait long-tems avant Ebn-Mocla ; qu'Ebn-Mocla ne fut point, à proprement parler, l'inventeur d'une nouvelle écriture, *et qu'il n'y eut point un passage subit* du caractère coufique au caractère *Neskhhi* ; enfin, *qu'avant le caractère coufique, il y avait un autre caractère très analogue à celui dont on fait encore usage aujourd'hui*.

“ J'ai fait voire ensuite que la découverte de nos papyrus faisait évanouir les doutes qui pouvaient encore rester, sur l'attribution faite par M. le comte Castiglioni et par M. Froehn, au khalife Abd-almélic, de certaines monnaies avec figures, qui offrent des légendes en caractères arabes, très approchans de l'écriture *Neskhhi*. Enfin j'ai terminé mon mémoire par une dernière observation que je vais transcrire ici.

“ ‘ J'avouerai, ’ ai-je dit, ‘ que jusqu'ici je m'étais refusé à reconnaître le nom de la ville de *Damas*, écrit en caractères arabes, sur les monnaies avec figures, publiées par M. l'abbé Sestini, qui les attribuait à Léon le

Khazare, et que M. Marchant, dans ses mélanges de numismatique et d'histoire, attribue au khalife Abd-almélic, et considère *comme des essais de monnaie, dont la politique des Musulmans a commencé de rapprocher le style et la fabrique du système monétaire des empereurs, pour en favoriser le cours.* De là aussi, suivant lui, le mélange du grec et l'arabe sur ces médailles. Je ne vois plus maintenant de raison pour refuser de reconnaître le nom arabe de *Damas* sur ces médailles, ni celui de Tibériade طبرية sur la monnaie frappée sous Héradius, ou ce même nom se lit aussi en grec. *Peut-être faudra-t-il même réformer toutes nos idées sur la chronologie des différentes écritures arabes, et admettre que le caractère Neskhî, dont on fixait l'invention au 3^{me} siècle de l'hégire, existait à peu près, sous sa forme actuelle, avant que les Arabes du Hedjaz reçussent d'Anbar ou de Hira celui qui a donné naissance au caractère coufique.*

“Agréez, monsieur, l'assurance des sentimens avec lesquels je suis, &c.,

“LE BARON S. DE SACY.”*

The priority of the *Neskhî*, by at least two centuries, to the date vulgarly assigned for its invention, is irrefragably proved by the evidence of the Egyptian papyruses, here adduced by M. de Sacy. But the truth of the case ascends far higher than this illustrious orientalist had been led to conceive. The real antiquity of the *Neskhî* is traceable, through the written monuments of Egypt, of Sinai, and of Southern Arabia, to the primitive ages and records of mankind. Its characters appear, in their present forms, upon the Egyptian monuments, from the age of the earliest Pharaohs

* Journal Asiatique, 2^{de} series, tome vii. pp. 104—110.

to that of the Rosetta stone; they are repeated, amidst Hamyaritic characters, in the Sinaïtic inscriptions*; and, by favour of the Council of the Royal Geographical Society, I have now in my possession a hieroglyphical inscription (obtained by Capt. Haines, I. N., now our political agent at Aden), bearing strong internal marks of remote antiquity, from the rocks of Djebel Ham-moum, in Southern Arabia, which, amidst its Hamyaritic characters, contains eight or ten letters of the Neskhi alphabet, so clear and perfect, that, were types cast from them, they might be employed, without detection, in an Arabic printed volume. The simple explanation is this, that the Neskhi, like the Hamyaritic, belonged to prior and primitive alphabets; and that *selection*, not invention, was the only office of the alphabet-makers of after-times.

NOTE 3. p. 20.] Those who adopt the Professor's theory are of course of a very different opinion. I give a specimen, but spare the name of the author: "The Wádí Mùkatteb, or Sinaïte character, Professor Beer has *proved*, belonged to the Nabathæans. — In a sub-joined table of alphabets, I give the Sinaïte or Naba-thæan alphabet, as made out by Professor Beer. I add to it various alphabets of the cognate languages, from a comparison of which, as well as from the Professor's readings, one may satisfy himself that he has correctly represented the power of the Sinaïte letters. *When I first saw the inscriptions in Wádí Mùkatteb, I was satisfied that they could thus be deciphered.*" By this school of philology we are in little danger of being troubled with the πολλῆς πείρας τελευταίου ἐπιγένημα.

* "Haud desunt inscriptiones, quæ utrum Sinaicæ an Arabicæ sint nescias." — Beer, Introd. p. xv.

NOTE 4. p. 26.] “Rupium saxorumque superficies nequaquam est præparata ad inscriptiones excipiendas, sed naturalem ejus asperitatem auctores ita vicerunt ut læviores superficiei partes eligerent, unde inscriptiones maxima varietate et sine ullo ordine in rupe se excipiunt. Nec ipsi versus rectâ lineâ scripti esse solent, negligenter enim et festinanter factæ sunt plurimæ; id quod multis quæ hodieque egregie servatæ sunt, imperfectæ conditionis speciem facit et confusum aspectum. Quæ earum conditio ex eo satis explicatur quod auctores lapidem inscribebant ipsi nullo artifice neque ullo instrumento ad incidendum apto utentes; et vix eo consilio veniebant, ut rupibus aliquid inciderent, sed in transitu hoc faciebant.” — *Introd.* pp. viii, ix.

NOTE 5. p. 27.] “*Scripturam* autem aliam quam Nabathæorum esse valde dubito: liber enim litterarum ductus, et audax conjunctio, *qualem in lapidibus nullius populi ejus ætatis vel superioris novi*, populum cui originem debent hæc inscriptiones, et multum et *calligraphice* scripsisse indicavit, itaque cultum rebusque publicis florentem fuisse produnt.” — *Ib.* p. xvi.

If this and the preceding note be not ode and palinode, I leave to the reader.

NOTE 6. p. 37.] “On board the *Cleopatra*, May 24. 1845. — On the fourth of this month I set out for Sinai; and on reaching the Wady Mokatteb, I and my people kept a sharp look-out for the writings. At the first graven rock which I espied, I ordered a halt, at about 10½ A. M. I then reconnoitred the neighbourhood, and found that if we tarried three days, or even two, our water and provisions would not hold out till

the convent, whither we must go to take in a six-days' supply for our return. The expense, too, of detaining the camels and Arabs would be not inconsiderable. I therefore determined to select only the best and clearest inscriptions for copying, and worked, almost unremittingly, from noon to sunset under a burning sun; my servant, and the Arab Shieck and his boy, holding an umbrella over me in turns. The next morning, before sunrise, I went to work again; and when the sun began to wax hot, I called my servant to bear the umbrella as before. He, having something to do in the tent, called the Shieck; and he, from out of a rocky cave where he lay, called the boy; and forth came the poor boy from another shady retreat, to face the fierce glare of the sun, wondering what could possess the Frangee to stop in this frightful desert, to copy these useless, and (as he thought) unintelligible writings. I worked till noon*; and then took a slight meal, and set forth on my journey. I reached the delicious Wady Feiran, with its pure running stream and groves of palm-trees, at 8 P. M. Here, again, *the unknown characters abound*. They are found, also, in various other places; and specially around the foot of Mount Serbal. To stop, therefore, and copy them all, would require more time and means than I can command; and had I attempted to do so, I must at once have abandoned all thoughts of proceeding to Southern Arabia. I have done, therefore, what I could with the limited resources at my disposal. There is, as I learned from the Arabs, about two or three days north of Mokatteb, a carving

* One of his inscriptions sent to me is thus endorsed: "No. 17. Mem. Many after this too much effaced to be read, *and many inaccessible without a ladder.*"

of a man and woman in large size, on a huge rock, with the unknown character below." — *Extract of a letter from Rev. T. Brookman.* Can these figures be representations of Hagar and Ishmael? They are towards, if not at, Mount Seir; and the Arabs conducted another friend of mine to an apartment high in the rock, ascended by a hidden staircase, called Beit Hagar, which they showed as the house of Hagar. Remains and traditions like these, in the East, are rarely without some foundation.

NOTE 7. p. 43.] The honour of forming, and maintaining through life, the true judgment, as to the purely alphabetic character of the enchorial text, belongs to a single name and memory, that of AKERBLAD. Dr. T. Young's account of the view taken by that eminent philologist is in place here. My comparative table of the alphabets of Sinai and Rosetta will show which party was mistaken.* "Mr. Akerblad, a diplomatic gentleman, then (1800-1805) at Paris, but afterwards the Swedish resident at Rome, had begun to decypher the middle [the enchorial] division of the inscription, after De Sacy had given up the pursuit as hopeless, notwithstanding that he had made out very satisfactorily the names of Ptolemy and Alexander. But both he and Mr. Akerblad proceeded upon the erroneous, or, at least, imperfect, evidence of the Greek authors, who have pretended to explain the different modes of writing among the ancient Egyptians, *and who have asserted very distinctly, that they employed on many occasions an alphabetical system composed of twenty-five letters.* The characters of the second part

* See Plate I. p. 43.

of the inscription being called, in the Greek inscription, ENCHORIA GRAMMATA, or letters of the country, it was natural to look among these for the alphabet in question: and Mr. Akerblad having principally deduced his conclusions from the preamble of the decree, which consists in great measure of foreign proper names, persisted to the time of his death in believing that this part of the inscription *was throughout alphabetical.*"—*Young on Hieroglyphic Literature*, chap. ii. p. 8, 9.

The comparative table, Plate I., brings the question to a short issue. If the Sinaitic characters be purely alphabetical, so must be, also, the enchorial characters of Egypt. All Europe acknowledges the one point; and the identity exhibited in Plate I. of this work proves the other. It is a moral pleasure to be thus enabled, after the lapse of nearly half a century, to pay this due tribute to departed merit.

NOTE 8. p. 50.] The reality, with regard to my reading the word forming the third line of this inscription as *ramah*, places the evidence for this decyphermment still higher than it is stated in the text. For the decyphermment was made from the inscription itself only, without any reference whatever to Mr. Gray's foot-note; which lay unnoticed in a corner below, until my attention was drawn to it by my own independent decyphermment of the word to which it proved to have such unexpected relation. Then, indeed, the importance of this pictorial authentication disclosed itself in all its force to myself and to the friends at whose residence the discovery was made. The remark at the time, of one versed in science, was, "This is mathematical." Apology is needless for bringing out the whole truth

in this case : because, where all had been darkness, the first clear gleam of light is precious as the apple of the eye.

NOTE 9. p. 54.] “ April 27. We travelled over uneven hilly ground, gravelly and flinty. At one hour and three quarters [from Wâdî Amara] we passed the well of Howara (بئر هواره), round which a few date trees grow. Niebuhr travelled the same route, but his guides probably did not lead him to this well; which lies among hills, about two hundred paces out of the road. He mentions a rock called *Hadjer Rakkabe*, as one German mile short of Gharendel. I remember to have halted under a large rock, close by the roadside, a very short distance before we reached Howara, but I did not learn its name. The water of the well of Howara is *so bitter*, that men cannot drink it; and even camels, if not very thirsty, refuse to taste it. From Ayoun Mousa to the well of Howara, we had travelled fifteen hours and a quarter. Referring to this distance, it seems probable that this is the desert of three days, mentioned in the Scriptures to have been crossed by the Israelites, immediately after their passing the Red Sea, and at the end of which they arrived at Marah. In moving with a whole nation, the march may well be supposed to have occupied three days; and the *bitter well at Marah*, which was sweetened by Moses, *corresponds exactly with that of Howara*. This is the usual route to Mount Sinai; and was probably, therefore, that which the Israelites took on their escape from Egypt; provided it be admitted that they crossed the sea near Suez, as Niebuhr, with good reason, conjectures. *There is no other road of three days’ march, in the way from Suez towards Sinai; nor is there any other well*

absolutely bitter on the whole of this coast, as far as Ras Mohammed [the extreme southern point of the peninsula]. The complaints of the bitterness of the water by the children of Israel, who had been accustomed to the sweet water of the Nile, are such as may daily be heard from the Egyptian servants and peasants who travel in Arabia. Accustomed from their youth to the excellent water of the Nile, there is nothing which they so much regret, in countries distant from Egypt; nor is there any Eastern people who feel so keenly the want of good water, as the present natives of Egypt. With respect to the means employed by Moses to render the waters of the well sweet, I have frequently inquired among the Bedouins, in different parts of Arabia, whether they possessed any means of effecting such a change, by throwing wood into it, or by any other process: but I never could learn that such an art was known."—*Burckhardt, Travels in Syria*, p. 472, 473.

"Monday, March 19. We rose early, and set off with the rising sun. At 12 o'clock we entered among the hills. At 2½ o'clock we passed a large square rock, lying near the foot of the hill on our right. It is called Hajr, or Rukkab, 'Stone of the riders,' and is mentioned by Niebuhr. Fifteen minutes beyond this, we came to the fountain Hawâreh, lying to the left of the road on a large mound, composed of a whitish rocky substance, formed, apparently by the deposits of the fountain during the lapse of ages. No stream was *now* flowing from it; *though there are traces of running water* round about. The basin is six or eight feet in diameter [why not measured?], and the water about two feet deep. Its taste is unpleasant, saltish, and somewhat

bitter; but we could not perceive that it was very much worse than that of Ayûn Mûsa; perhaps because we were not yet connoisseurs in bad water. *The Arabs, however, pronounce it bitter*, and consider it as the worst water in all these regions. Yet, when pinched, they drink of it; and our camels drank of it freely. The fountain of Hawârah is first distinctly mentioned by Burckhardt. Pococke, perhaps, saw it; though his language is quite indefinite. Niebuhr passed this way; but his guides did not point it out to him; probably because the Arabs make no account of it as a watering-place. Since Burckhardt's day it has generally been regarded as the bitter fountain of Marah, which the Israelites reached after three days' march without water, in the desert of Shur. The position of the spring, and the nature of the country, tally very exactly with this supposition. After having passed the Red Sea, the Israelites would naturally supply themselves from the fountains of Naba, and Ayûn Mûsa; and from the latter to Hawâra is a distance of about sixteen and a half hours, or thirty three geographical miles; which, as we have seen above, was, for them, a three days' journey. On the route itself there is no water. I see, therefore, no valid objection to the above hypothesis. The fountain lies at the specified distance, and on their direct route; for there is no probability that they passed by the lower and longer road along the sea shore."—*Robinson, Biblical Researches, &c.* vol. i. p. 95—98.

"Next day, starting at a quarter past seven, we reached the bitter well of Hawâra at half-past two; and watered the camels there. *The Arabs never drink of it themselves.* I tasted, and *at first* thought the water insipid rather than bitter, but, held in the mouth for a

few seconds, it becomes excessively nauseous. It rises within an elevated mound surrounded by sand-hills, and two small date-trees grow near it. There can be no doubt, I think, of this well being the *Marah* of Scripture, sweetened by Moses. The name *Marah* implying 'bitter,' seems to be preserved in that of the *Wady Amara*, which we crossed shortly before reaching it. *There is no other well*, Hussein tells me, *on the whole coast, absolutely undrinkable.*" — *Lord Lindsay, Travels in Egypt, Edom, &c.* vol. i. p. 262, 263.

NOTE 10. p. 55.] "About half a mile in advance of this conspicuous object (the rock of Rakkáb) we came to the *Ain Hawarah*, the "well of destruction,"* a fountain on a small knoll close to the track, on its eastern side, which we were pursuing. It occupies a small basin *about five feet* in diameter, and eighteen inches deep, and to some extent it oozes through the sands, leaving, like the wells of Moses, a deposit of lime. I believe that I was the first of our party to essay to drink of its water; but the Arabs, on observing me about to take a potation of it, exclaimed '*Murrah, murrah, murrah*,' (مرره the fem. of مرر) — 'It is bitter, bitter, bitter.'

"This fountain has been almost universally admitted by travellers, since the days of Burckhardt, who first precisely indicates its situation, to be the true *Marah* of Scripture, as it is found in a situation about thirty miles from the place where the Israelites *must* have landed on the eastern shore of the Red Sea, — a space

* Golius gives a very different version: "مرر Stagnum, palusve, in quam quis facile demergitur."

sufficient for their march, when they went three days in the wilderness and found no water. No other constant spring is found in the intermediate space. It retains its ancient character, and has a bad one among the Arabs, who seldom allow their camels to partake of it. Only one or two of our animals tasted it; and the Arabs left us to experiment upon its qualities, without even applying it to their lips." — *Lands of the Bible*, i. p. 170, 171.

NOTE 11. p. 56.] See preceding Notes 9. and 10. Its basin being a self-formed case of *travertine*, accounts for the unchanged form of the well of Marah. On the formation and properties of travertine, see Sir H. Davy, "Last Days of a Philosopher," dialogue III. pp. 124-133. "The crystallizations are formed with a wonderful rapidity, and they are no sooner produced than they are destroyed."—*ib.* p. 126.

NOTE 12. p. 76.] In confirmation of this view, the groundwork of the present work, see ap. "Sylloge Dissertationum Philologico-Exegeticarum, Leidæ, 1772," a Treatise by Polier (an orientalist of the Leyden, and of Albert Schultens's, school), entitled "Dissertatio Philologica qua disquiritur de puritate dialecti Arabicæ, comparata cum puritate dialecti Hebrææ, in relatione ad antediluvianam Linguam."

The author opens his subject with a testimony grounded on the results of his studies. "Totum me ad se pertraxit admirabilis illa puritas dialecti Arabicæ, quæ mihi ex interiori cognitione fundamentorum ejus adfulgebat, quum in ejus paradigmatis versandis occuparer. Illa mihi videbatur non tantum Chaldaicam

et Syriacam puritate vincere; sed etiam dialectum Hebraicam superare, *in relatione ad vetustissimam et primævam illam linguam quam cum origine mundi incepisse, et in orbe antediluviano obtinuisse, cum reliquis viris doctissimis tenemus et dubio vacuum censemus.*"

His *Thesis*, in developement of the grounds of this judgment, is, "*Dialectus Arabicæ puriorem et antiquiorem formam Linguae antediluvianæ distinctius obtinet, quam Hebraica.*"

This Thesis the author sustains through a series of examples, in which, in words common to both idioms, the Arabic forms bear the marks of being the original, ~~the Hebraic, of being derivative, forms.~~

The field occupied by this Treatise is defined in the following passage. "Per dialectum itaque Arabicam, et Hebraicam, *propagines duas maximas Linguae antediluvianæ* indigito; cujus aliæ item duæ sunt Chaldaica et Syriaca, quæ tam arcte sibi cohærent, quam dialecti Linguae antiquæ Græcæ, Ionica, Attica, Æolica, et Dorica. Ut hæc clarius edisseram, aio dialectum Hebraicam esse propaginem Linguae primævæ, quæ ejus indolem representat in ea parte quæ ad nos pervenit in Textu Hebræo-Biblico. *Hæc vir est centissima pars illius lingue antediluvianæ*; hinc elicio Adamum, stricte loquendo, non locutum esse Hebraicè, *sed eam linguam qua postea usi sunt in Familia Heberi*, sic enim hoc absurdum sequeretur, quod Heber, jam tempore Adami vivere debuerit. Arabicam quoties dialectum nomino, toties eam intelligo, *quam locuti sunt Arabes Jemanenses*, Heberi posteritas per Joktanum, Phalegi fratrem natu minorem. Per antediluvianam Linguam intelligo, eam qua orbis antediluvianus per 16 fere secula usus, quæ

tandem cœpit nomine Hebraicæ, Aramææ, Arabicæ, insigniri." — *Polier, ut supr.* p. 239—242.

It is the Hamyaritic, therefore, which is here considered as the primeval language of mankind. The opinions of Sale, and of Sir William Jones, upon the antiquity of the Arabic idiom (in entire harmony with that of Polier), are too well known to need quotation.

NOTE 13. p. 79.] The *principle* of primeval language is strikingly exemplified in the Chinese. "It has been remarked by the great philologer Humboldt, that the Chinese and the Sanscrit languages exemplify the two most opposite methods of construction. The Sanscrit denotes all the relations and connexions of words, and of ideas, by grammatical forms, written, and expressed in pronunciation. The Chinese *leave the perception of these relations to be the work of the mind*. The use of some particles being excepted, of which the Chinese can, however, in a great measure, dispense, this language expresses *all grammatical relation of words* by mere *position*, fixed according to certain invariable rules, and by the explanation of sense, which the context, or connexion, of the sentence implies." *—*Prichard, Physical History of Man*, vol. iv. p. 541.

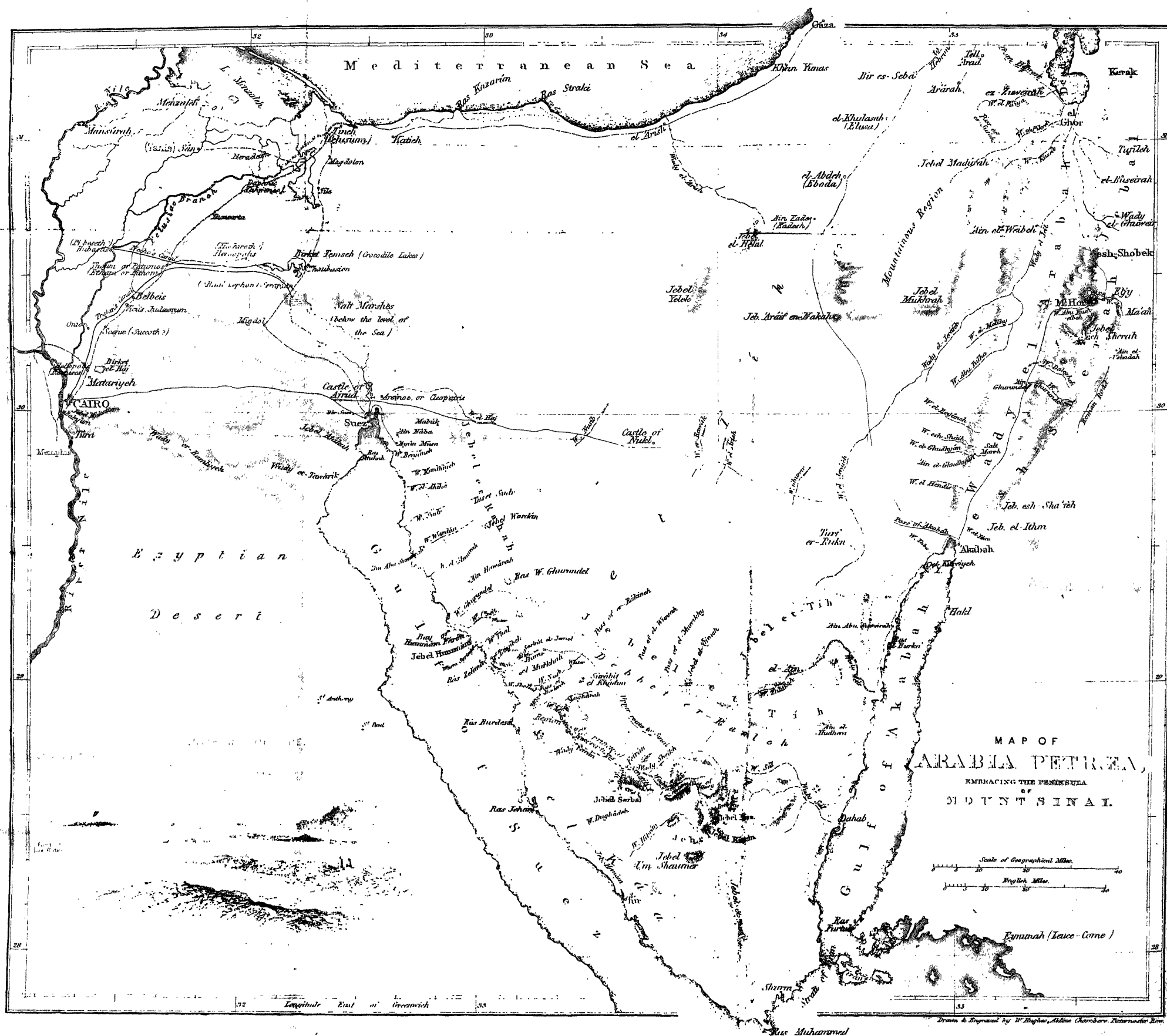
The Celtiberians of Biscay are identified by Humboldt with one of the primitive races, the Iberians; and it is very remarkable that the Celtiberian alphabet is nearly identical with the Hamyaritic. Dr. Prichard's account of this people supplies a curious nexus utriusque in the

* Among the Grisons, I understand, there is a similar phenomenon of dialect with that already adverted to in remote districts of Italy; a language destitute of the accidents of speech, and believed to be primitive, a relic of the Etruscan.

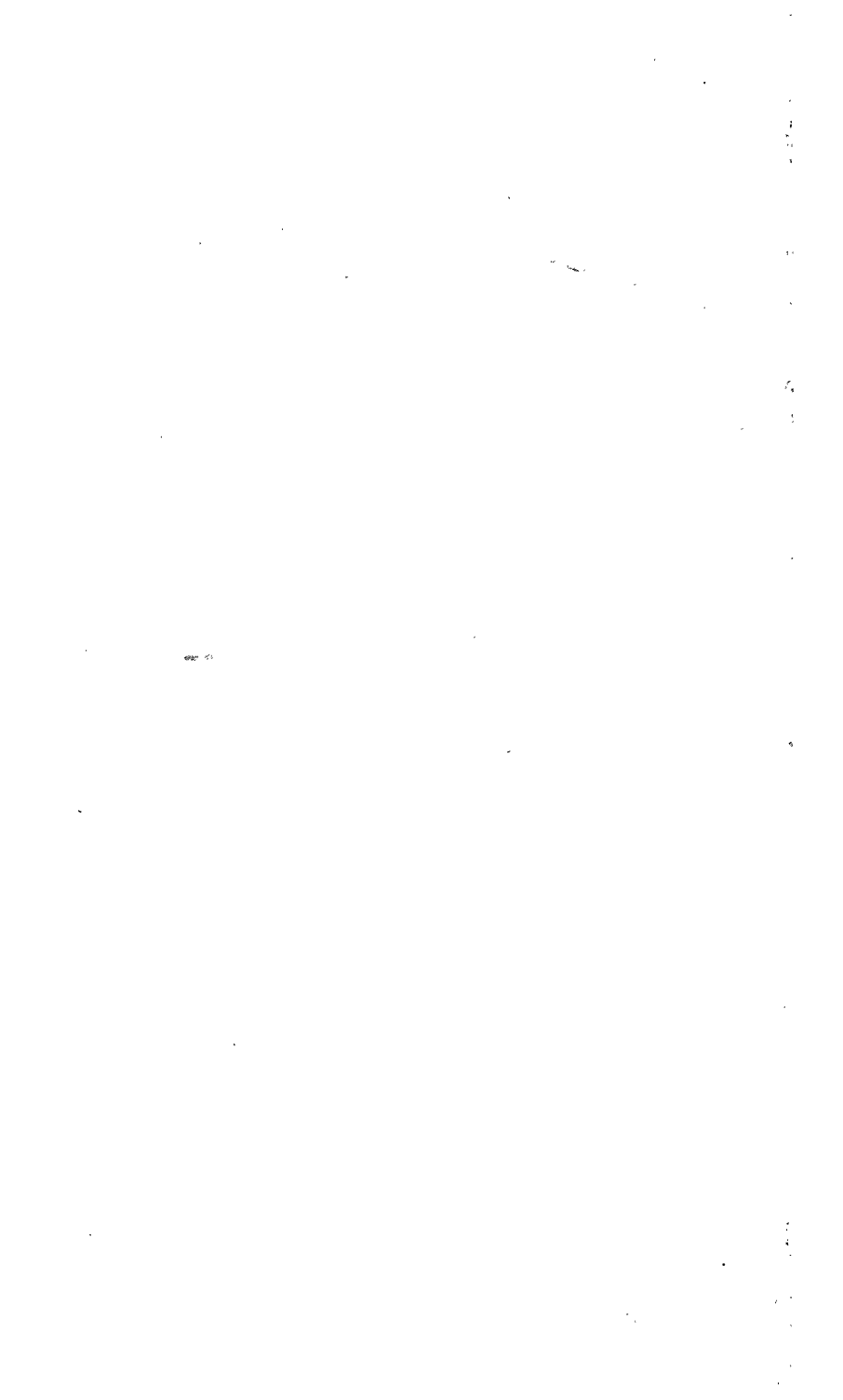
family of nations. "Passing from South-eastern Asia to the extreme western border of Europe, we find, on the flanks of the Pyrenean range, the remains of a people now known under the name of the Basques or Biscayans. *There is no doubt that these are the representatives of the ancient Iberians*; a people who inhabited the northern coast of the Mediterranean, from Italy westward, *before their occupation by the Celtic nations*. The national appellation of these people, in their own idiom, is Euscaldenses; and they term their language the *Eushara*, or *Euskarian* speech. This language has been attentively studied, especially by the late celebrated Baron William Von Humboldt; who, during a residence in Spain, devoted himself to this subject, and to the collection of materials illustrative of the ancient literature of the Iberians. He has hence come to the conclusion, which corresponds with that founded upon other data, *that the Iberians belong to the very earliest stock of European nations*; and, so far from their language being derived from the Celtic (as some writers have supposed), it must have been in existence at a period *long anterior* to the migration of the Celtic nations into Western Europe. But the Eskarian has some remarkable traits of resemblance to the Finnish language, and, thence, to the general family of languages in High Asia."—*Brit. and For. Medical Review*, No. xlviii. p. 464.

NOTE 14. p. 79.] "Exod. xv. 19. *Ingressus est enim eques Pharaο cum curribus et equitibus ejus in mare.*] Sincera est (quod etiam Epanorthotes annotavit) aliorum codicum lectio, *equus Pharaο*: ita enim Hebraicè est, ita Græcè, ἵππος Φαραώ. Accipitur autem *equus* collectivè: quamobrem Chaldæus vertit, *Ingressa*

est, סוכות פרעה, multitudo equorum Pharaonis, cum curribus suis, et equitibus suis in mare. F. Magdalius, in suo Bibliorum Correctorio, notat, Equus *legi debet, non eques; nisi equitem pro ipso jumento cui insidetur accipere velimus.* Utrumque enim eques significat, ut refert Aulus Gellius lib. 18. c. 5. Hæc ille rectè Rabanus legit ex Græco (nam Græcam translationem quandoque intermiscet), *Intravit equitatus Pharao cum quadrigis et ascensoribus in mare: ἵππος enim etiam equitatum significat.* — *Luc. Brug. in Exod. xv. 19., ap. Crit. Sacr.*







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